THE

NEW ÆRA;

OR,

Adventures of Julien Delmour:

RELATED BY HIMSELF.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MADAME DE GENLIS.

ne faut point mettre un ridicule où il n'y en point. c'est se gâter le goût c'est corrompre son jugement et celui des autres. Mais le ridicule qui est quelque part, il faut l'y voir, l'en tirer avec grâce et d'une manière qui plaise et qui instruise. *Caractères de la Bruyere.*

VOL. II.

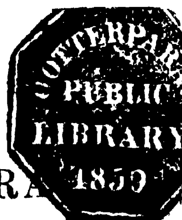
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THE NEW ÆRA

OR

ADVENTURES

OF

JULIEN DELMOUR,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

CHAPTER I.

Departure of the Viscount for Normandy.--He is accompanied by his Wife and Julien.—They go to a Neighbouring Castle belonging to Count Joseph.—Account of the Persons they meet there.—Inexplicable conduct of the Viscount.

As soon as the winter was over, we departed for an estate of the Viscount's in Normandy, and situated within six leagues of one which belonged to Count

Joseph, who was already there, with Edelie. Ever since his marriage, the Count acted with great prudence; for he not only broke off his acquain-tance with the Baroness de Blimont, but entirely gave up play. The Viscount, who showed the utmost friendship for him, had been extremely kind to the Count in several little affairs of pecu-niary interest, and as he imagined I must have had some share in these transac-tions, we were on the best terms.

It was in this year I had, for the first time, an opportunity of witnessing the mode of living in our noblemen's country seats, which pleased me exceed-ingly on account of the perfect liberty it seemed to afford. This estate had belonged to the illustrious house of Ing-lar above four hundred years; but the Marchioness, who was not fond of old castles, on the plea of their remoteness from the Court, where she had a place, could never be induced to live here, infinitely prefering her neat villa at Etio-les, to the finest country house in France.

As we went over all the rooms, on the first night of our arrival, I was soon enabled to admire the nobleness and grandeur of the apartments, together with the surprizing solidity of the whole building. It was here, that I first saw cabinets formed within the thickness of the walls: good heavens! I would exclaim, they must have built for eternity in those days!..Yes, replied the Viscount, people then not only thought of their children but of posterity; aye! continued he, and honour to that excellent Baron d'Inglar, who, under the reign of Charles VIII, on returning covered with glory, from the brilliant expedition to Naples, caused this castle to be built, at an enormous expence, for me and my descendants; for if not demolished, this vast edifice may yet serve to accommodate many generations.—Certainly, said I, we ought to revere the memory of such men, and all other heads of families, who have left similar monuments of paternal tenderness behind them!—Here, rejoined

the Count, every thing recalls our ancestors to mind; all the hangings and tapestry you see, were made by some female progenitor; the chapel is full of fine pictures, with which my grand-father decorated it after returning from his embassies to Spain and Italy, where he purchased these specimens of art. It was after the battle of Marignano, that a Peter d'Inglar, covered with honorable wounds, came, at the age of seventy, to finish his days at this castle, and that he founded a gratuitous school in the village for poor children. It was he who repaired the church, and that caused the erection of a superb mausoleum of marble in it, to his father-in-law; he also built the parsonage house;*

* It ought to be said in praise of the ancient nobility, that all these acts of beneficence were performed on the large estates; previous to the revolution, you every where saw charity-schools, and tombs raised by filial piety, in the church-yards and villages; there was a superb one in that of Genlis; and several are yet to be seen round Paris, particularly in the Gothic churches of Liancour, Villars-Saint-Pol, &c,

these, my friend are the traditions that really ennoble families, and which alone render them respectable. Memory was only given to man for the purpose of civilizing him, and for the advancement of science and art ; to perpetuate the noblest recollections, and the finest sentiments of the human heart, those of admiration and gratitude ; in fact, when nations fall into barbarism, remembrance is no longer encouraged ; it is extinguished, and with that, useful emulation and every generous feeling : as he pronounced these words, we entered the long gallery containing the portraits of all his ancestors ; this sight produced a striking effect on my mind, reminding me of those Roman Patricians, who caused the statues of their forefathers to be carried in funereal procession ; I could not help thinking it was as ridiculous for any one to be proud of having five or six hundred thousand livres left to him, as it is natural to glory in being able to count a number of great men in his pedigree.

I looked with a degree of peculiar respect on this young and worthy descendant of so many distinguished personages, who had all occupied eminent situations in the army and government, and many of whom possessed claims to public gratitude. Eusebius related the exploits of some, and political services rendered by others, or their acts of munificence ; for he was quite as well acquainted with the history of his family as that of his country.

After having visited the whole of the building, there was only one part that excited my criticism, the arrangement and distribution of the apartments, I could not help observing that those of modern houses, were infinitely more commodious : to which remark the Viscount perfectly agreed. However, added he, smiling, that which may be considered as an excuse for the old architects, was that the intimate union of families, and simplicity of manners rendered divisions, together with the multiplicity of doors,

and hidden stair cases much less necessary than at present. This reflection was by no means ill founded, and it is certainly true that the prevailing taste for independence, has greatly contributed to the interior convenience, and general comfort of modern edifices.

We led a very steady life here, the regularity of which I greatly admired, though it did not surprize me, from knowing the religious principles of Eusebius and his wife; that which excited my wonder was, to observe the same decorous system pursued in the castle of a neighbour, who had the credit of being a most licentious character at Paris. As my astonishment on this subject was communicated to the Viscount, he said, you will see the same thing in all our country residences, whether the proprietors be religious or otherwise; it does not arise from hypocrisy, for none of those who are divested of piety, ever approach the communion table; but all observe the prescribed fast days; cause

mass to be regularly performed, so as that no part of the household should omit this duty, and during feast days, they attend not only at the grand parochial mass, but all other ceremonies of a religious nature. These acts of duty they very properly consider due to religion, which is the only sure basis and pledge of public morals; they are at the same time useful and necessary examples to the peasantry. The lord of a manor, while resident on his estate, could not act otherwise, without being justly accused of thoughtlessness and a defective education. Yes, said I, to show some respect for religion, is only to respect the most sublime of all obligations, and an absurd forgetfulness or insolent contempt for every kind of religious worship, betrays a grossness of principles, manners, and sentiments truly revolting. Very true, rejoined Eusebius, but such is the state, to which a multitude of corrupt writers, leagued together during the last forty years, wish to lead us; men, who have

united to confound and annihilate all moral principle, and consequently to destroy religion.—But they will fail in this horrible plot, our country is so refined, and generous!...... — My friend, interrupted the Viscount, an impetuous torrent, full of impurities, that falls into the clearest lake, soon disturbs its limpidness, and in carrying a long the pure and peaceful waters, the surrounding shores are sure to be poisoned by its inundations. You admire the respect which people still show for religion in the provinces; it has however greatly diminished: my father has told me, that when young, it was customary for families always to say the evening prayers together; this practice, not to mention many others equally praiseworthy no longer exists. The declamations against our priesthood has already weakened the veneration of the people for all the ministers of religion, although it is well known that the clergy of France, are in general highly respectable, particu-

larly the whole body of curates; the licentiousness of impiety, has no longer any bounds in the pamphlets of the day, or even more voluminous books, which are filled with blasphemy, obscurity and moral turpitude;* have they not in fact, told us, and often repeated, that a republic of atheists, would form the most tolerant, mild, and peaceable government in the universe?.... — Nevertheless, atheism, like faith has also its zeal, and as this besotted fanaticism is without any fixed object, but ardent, because produced by pride in a state of enthusiasm, it will certainly lead to atrocities and persecution. —Yes! said I, we have already seen fine proofs of philosophical toleration, in the abuse heaped upon the clergy, together with the detraction and calumnies of which it is made the object! a republic of atheists would present the hideous spectacle of every vice and the greatest crimes united; but said I, it is perhaps desirable

* See the Philosophical Dictionary, &c. &c. &c.

that this frightful republic should exist for some time, as the modern philosophy thus put into practice would not fail to inspire a just degree of horror.——— Ah! my dear Julien, people suffer themselves to be led on to evil, by a very easy and rapid gradation; but what efforts, reflexion, experience, and courage is there not required, to bring us back to virtue! when all ideas of morality are at variance, and in confusion, when every check is destroyed, and all the passions set in motion, time alone can restore order, establish peace, and revive good manners. This interview made a deep impression on me, and I have often recollected it since!......

Three weeks after our arrival in this beautiful Province, the Viscount received an invitation from his sister and brother-in-law, to pass a fortnight at their country house. I was not forgotten in Count Joseph's letter, he mentioned my name in the most obliging terms, and I was of course invited to accompany Eusebius, and his wife;

we therefore set out, in two days after, for ***. Where the Marquis de Solmire, and young de Palmis, now eighteen years of age, and still a little under the tutelage of the Abbé Aillet, who had by this time assumed the title of his friend, had already been for some days. The Baron was charmed to see his old travelling companion, and quite overpowered me with kindness; he informed us that a large party was expected the next day; amongst others, his step-mother, the Duchess de Palmis, and her sister-in-law the Marchioness, together with their husbands. I have already said, that Edelie had been at the Convent while the Duchess was also there, she now felt the greatest delight in receiving this companion of early life. And spoke in such a flattering manner of her former school-fellow, that it proved she had not forgotten the amiable qualities of that excellent woman. One evening, while Tiburtius was absent from the drawing-room, and that Edelie followed up this

eulogium by some additional remarks, Eusebius observed, I am sure that she was not generally liked by the other boarders, and that they considered her rather pedantic. By no means, answered his sister, she was on the contrary, so lively, mild, affable, and obliging, there was so much natural indulgence, and steadiness in her intercourse with us all, that every one adored her; she was extremely pious, and on one occasion I recollect her telling us, she had vowed never to enter into any of our youthful frolics, which thenceforth exempted her from taking any part in them; but this did not prevent her from becoming the confidant of all our little tricks, at which she used to laugh; although we were earnestly advised to desist; if she succeeded, it seemed to afford her great satisfaction; but on our persisting, she would never enter into tedious sermons about detering us from them, but kept whatever she heard a profound secret. How was it possible, asked Eusebius,

for so young a person to be thus prudent and demure?—The following facts replied Edelie, which she told me at the time, will clear up that part of the subject :—her mother was a woman of the most exalted merit, and died when she had only attained her tenth year. This tender parent superintendedher daughter's education to that age, and chiefly took care to form her mind; naturally of a feeling disposition, she gave the Duchess an idea of perfection, that stimulated her self-love and warmed her imagination to such a degree, that the young pupil was persuaded the attainment of this perfection so rare, and desirable, is by no means chimerical, and that it furnishes the only means on earth, for overcoming all difficulties, and securing happiness; finally, she left her various moral lessons written with her own hand, and a plan of study for her youthful years. On the evening before her death, and after having received all the sacraments, she gave her benediction to the Duchess,

consigning the lessons to her charge, at the same time exacting a promise from the latter, that she would make a point of reading a part of them daily.—The child who was adored by her mother, and whose talents were far above her age, was thus at this early period of life, placed in the road to virtue, by youthful habits, religion, and filial piety; nor do I think she will ever swerve from it in any respect: what a pity, continued Edelie, that a woman so perfect, beautiful as an angel, and in all the flower of her youth, should be the wife of a man fifty-six years old, of a most changeable disposition, and as jealous as a tiger!....

This story plunged Eusebius into a reverie, out of which it was impossible to draw him during all the remainder of the evening. He had often met the beautiful and brilliant Marchioness de Palmis; but only saw the Duchess once, because she neither frequented balls or theatres, had no situation at Court, and led a very retired life in the bosom of

her own family. She arrived on the day expected, accompanied by her husband, brother, and sister-in-law; I have already observed that the Duchess had not so striking a figure as her sister, but the more you looked at her charming face the handsomer it grew: it brightened up in speaking; her smile was enchanting, and every feature full of grace; all the men, found her just as I have described; but the little notice she took of them, the wisdom of her deportment, the calmness, and serenity of her physiognomy, removed every desire to importune or approach her with any improper familiarity; in fact, the only persons she attracted, were children, women and old men: those of a less advanced age, felt that gallantry towards the Duchess would be not only useless, but misplaced and ridiculous. Every eye was therefore directed to the Marchioness, and on the very day of her arrival, two new suitors were added to the number of her adorers, Count Joseph and the Marquis de Solmire.

I did not find the duke de Palmis by any means so morose as he had been described to me; he had, it is true, something abrupt in his tone and manners; but I observed with pleasure that he was full of attentions to his wife, and seemed to be on the most affectionate terms with her. Besides I knew that he had displayed the greatest courage and talents in the field; nothing is more ornamental to grey hair than laurels!—Glory, in fact renders every old man venerable, while it generally insures respect. The duke had, in his younger days, made a long campaign with the Marquis d'Inglar; the recollection of this circumstance inspired him with a degree of attachment and respect for Eusebius, which he very rarely manifested towards persons of his age: but the Viscount's reputation for prudence, his dignified and reserved manners, soon had the effect of completely gaining him the Duke's friendship. Early the next morning Eusebius and myself went to walk in the park: he was pensive and thoughtful, so that no con-

versation passed, till on turning up an avenue we met the Duke, who joined us, and immediately broke our previous silence, by saying that he had just received an express from Versailles containing intelligence that obliged him to set off for that place the same day. but that he should only be three or four days absent; and would in the mean time leave the Duchess with Edelie as a *hostage*. he then asked if the Viscount wished to charge him with any letters; Eusebius thanked him, observing that he expected business would very soon oblige himself to visit Paris, a circumstance that greatly surprized me. The Duke continued to speak of his wife, and it was in terms of admiration no less sincere than well founded, till a valet-de-chambre, who brought a message to her husband put an end to the interview. In quitting us, the Duke told Eusebius, he would feel great pleasure in cultivating so agreeable an acquaintance, and that the Duchess would be equally happy to receive the brother

and sister-in-law of Edelie at her house. The Viscount only answered by making a low bow, and when the Duke was out of sight, I inquired what affair (of which I was completely ignorant,) could possibly oblige him to return to Paris so very soon? My dear friend, he replied, it is a secret which I am not permitted to reveal; and if my duty did not oblige me to hide the circumstance be assured you would not have found it necessary to put the question. This reply occasioned no less surprize than regret on my part. I recollected that he had received a letter on the preceding evening, it was to that communication which he had not read to me, I attributed not only the projected journey, but the unusual gloomy mood I remarked him to be in, during our walk.

The Duke went off immediately after dinner; as to Eusebius he did not appear the whole day, except at meals, he was laconic and silent at supper, and disappeared the moment it was over. Having remained a few minutes in the room, I

proceeded to the Viscount's apartment, in the hope of finding him in his cabinet, where he always passed half an hour before going to bed; his valet told me, however, that he had not come in, so that I concluded he must be walking in the park. As the heat was excessive and there was a splendid moon, I went out; but on seeing that Eusebius wished to be alone, I returned in very low spirits to my room, where I sat down to read. In about two hours after, (it was now midnight) I heard a gentle knock at my door; and on going to open it, discovered the Viscount, I was so struck by the alteration in his countenance and the kind of vacancy expressed in his eyes, that I stood motionless. He advanced totteringly and throwing himself into an armed chair, covered his face with both hands!....My consternation was inexpressible, on contemplating the man whom I had always seen so calm, collected, and master of himself, in this condition!....preserving a painful silence, for I did not like to hazard the slightest

interrogation, he at length, seized my hand, and squeezing it very hard, said, Julien, I cannot open my heart to you, but I wished to give vent to my tears in your presence..I required the sympathetic eye of friendship ! . . . . Such was the stupor into which his language now threw me, that I could not articulate a single word in reply; but I looked wistfully at him, and felt satisfied that we understood each other although nothing was said. However, continued he, a little after, do not be uneasy: every thing may be supported with a pure conscience, and such a friend as you !. . . . I am going to Paris, and shall leave a letter for my sister, in which I have informed her, that an affair of great importance obliges me to undertake this journey: I have also said the same to my wife. Remain here with her during the time we were invited, then return to my own house, where I shall join you immediately after your arrival. By that time my sister will be under the necessity of departing to resume her attendance at Versailles; so

that nothing will interrupt our solitude during the remainder of the summer season. At these words, the Viscount embracing me, rushed out of the room, and left me quite thunderstruck at what had just happened!—Reflecting more maturely on it, I had some suspicions which were not very far from being well founded; but there remained one point in this adventure totally inexplicable! it was evident, that since supper time till the Viscount's entering my room, something very extraordinary must have occurred, to make him thus miserable: yet I ascertained, on the following day, that he had not in this short interval, either seen or spoken to a soul; the mystery was in fact altogether incomprehensible; it will however be fully explained in a future chapter, and the reader may then see that it was impossible then to penetrate an incident equally singular and affecting.

CHAP. II.

Julien's imprudence.—Intrigues in the Castle.

NEXT day, while absorbed in reflections on the conduct of the Viscount, and the secret grief which he could not confide to me; I was turned aside, from the inquietude it occasioned, by thoughts of a very different kind. Edelie though unconscious of it, possessed uncommon charms in my estimation; she had no coquetry; but when any one made himself agreeable to her, it was easy to perceive a certain degree of warmth in her address and manner; her gaiety would then be so natural and easy, that it often resembled partiality. On the other hand, our long acquaintance and the immense difference of rank that separated us, was quite suf-

ficient to make me be regarded as an object perfectly unimportant, in her eyes. But considering myself as one, who had been brought up the friend of Eusebius, the above ideas never occurred to my imagination ; self-love had a natural tendency to prevent this, while the secret affection I entertained removed them still farther from my mind. I had firmly resolved, not only never to declare but always to conceal a sentiment that was doubly culpable in me, since the sister of my friend was the object of it ; yet, it was gratifying to suppose that Edelie would have participated in this sentiment, if she could have done so without infringing on her duties. I was the only person in the castle who solely occupied himself in thinking of her ; the marquis de Palmis, who could never remain for any time in the same place without suffering the greatest *ennui* had gone to Rouen ; so that nothing interfered with the growing passion of the Marquis de

Solmire and Count Joseph, for the Marchioness, without giving them the least room to hope, amused herself at their expence and laughed at them with young Tiburtius, who, notwithstanding his extreme youth, already possessed as much finesse and roguery as many that were double his age.

Edelie plainly saw that her husband was in love with the Marchioness; one evening, on going out of the drawing room, which was on the ground floor and opened on a long terrace, she called me to walk with her, and taking my arm, observed, the Count will not be jealous. on the contrary, added she, smiling, I rather think he is glad to get rid of one whose presence often gives him some uneasiness, although I am far from being very troublesome. I was enchanted, though somewhat surprized at this little proof of confidence, but combatted the idea from motives of decorum. All you say on this subject, rejoined Edelie, is very

well intented, but completely useless; I freely open my mind to you, and expect the same frankness on your part; you must be convinced that Count Joseph is in love with the Marchioness de Palmis. —It is rather difficult, said I, to remark that which there is no possibility of discovering; but if what you say, be really the case, I am very sorry for it; as such a circumstance will be a source of uneasiness to yourself.—A very trifling one, I assure you.—Then you do not love the Count?- Pardon me, Julien, I do, but am proud, and when I see such versatility after a year's marriage, it naturally weakens my attachment. There is nothing good in matrimony but the fortnight that precedes and the two months which follow it. A suitor, who is young and handsome, is a delightful being! What gallantry, how complaisant and good tempered! What anxiety to please all those who surround his intended! what attentions to her family, the visitors, chamber maids, and all the servants, not forgetting the

lap-dog if there happens to be one! Bouquets and pearls are given in handfulls, nothing is heard but panegyrics. Her parents, like herself, are all goodness and sensibility. In thus multiplying its ties, people fancy they are also insuring a longer life, and that they will be sheltered from all the assaults of fortune by the proposed union! Such was my intoxication when I married; but, at the end of six weeks, I discovered that my father-in-law was a miser and gossip, my mother-in-law peevish, sour and pedantic; the whole family annoying and tiresome; my husband careless, light, extravagant, and incapable of participating in a sincere attachment; as a proof of which, you now see him ridiculously in love with a woman who laughs at his folly. I know my duty, and will not depart from it, but I shall not be at a loss what steps to take, much less be so foolish as to fret about the injuries of a husband, who has not even the delicacy of concealing them. — And pray, said I,

what do you think of this said Marchioness who makes so many faithless swains? —I think no conquests are made without ambition. If her angelic sister-in-law, the charming Octavia wished it, do you not suppose she might also have a brilliant train of adorers? — But I am inclined to believe, real love is not blazoned forth, and only nourished in silence....... The Duchess de Palmis is perhaps adored in secret.—It is certain that none will ever dare to declare themselves. — I see then, that you think the Marchioness a little coquettish? — Not altogether so; she takes no pains to attract, but does not know how to repel; and at twenty, this art is no longer to be learned. You see, my dear Julien, how freely I speak to you, but such is the force of old custom. —Which, I trust, you will never lose, said I. — Be assured you are the only person to whom I have expressed myself so candidly. I am passionately attached to my brother, but the amiableness of his character imposes silence, and it is for the

same reason that I do not tell my mind to the Duchess.... But, madam, I interrupted laughing, you ought, on the same principle to withdraw your confidence from me also, for I cannot help considering myself as equally rigid with the Viscount in such matters..... No, no! said she, do not entertain any scruples, we are much alike, do you not remember how they used to scold us in our infancy, and how prudent my brother was....— I recollect your often pinching me very hard...—That was a preference; I never dared do so to Eusebius. Here, to my great regret, our conversation ended by the arrival of the Duchess and her sister-in-law, who walked with us for another half hour, when we all re-entered the house.

I am convinced that, until this moment, my conduct was irreproachable. In fact, Edelie had not the least suspicion of my sentiments, and I had, as yet, said nothing that could open her eyes on their real nature; but I did not combat a senseless pas-

sion, which, increasing daily, got possession of my mind, and by degrees, shook resolutions which I thought immovable!..

I had determined not to show Edelie the emblem made from her sketch, and yet, I burned with anxiety to do so.—By way of overcoming all difficulties with myself, I would often say, that, from the great alterations I had made, she could no longer recognize it. The Marchioness requested that I would let her see all the finished cameos I had of my own execution, and one day, when in the drawing-room with Edelie and Tiburtius, she insisted that I should immediately go and bring them. I obeyed, and produced five or six, which were duly examined; I then took a small box out of my pocket and handed it to her, for Edelie was equally attentive to the subjects under examination, both were delighted with this little design; which the latter did not know again, although she remembered having once sketched out an emblem of Hope, adding

that she was very glad it was never completed, because mine combined all the requisite attributes, and was a hundred times better done. She then asked me if that was my device? — No, madam, I replied, nor shall I ever be so happy, as to adopt it. How ridiculous! said she, he must be either very humble indeed, or greatly to be pitied, who renounces hope.—But said I, if the only object one wishes for is unattainable? . . . . Very well, said Tiburtius, we flatter ourselves, and still hope. This part of the conference ended by the Marquis de Solmire's entering the room, when, the Marchioness showed him the symbol, with which he was quite charmed, and still continuing to retain the box in her own hand, she observed, since this is not your device, I am going to hazard a proposal; I am enraptured with the subject, which is besides exquisitely drawn; will you leave it with me, and receive two of my miniatures, to be selected from the whole, by yourself, in exchange? This, said I, is to offer an inestimable

gift for a trifle, and yet...—You will not accept it?—I cannot; I should feel highly flattered by your accepting all the cameos you have just seen, but as to this trifle, I am not permitted to part with it: an engagement, which it is impossible to break through, prevents me from doing so.—That is to say you have given it away already; on this, she returned the box; took one of the cameos, and in exchange, gave me a beautiful miniature. Tiburtius and the Marquis de Solmire, however, blamed me very much for not giving up the emblem, not conceiving that any thing could be refused to her by whom it had been requested.

Towards sunset, Edelie and myself again walked out on the terrace; while there, do you know, said she, that you have rather vexed the Marchioness, who is not accustomed to refusals: besides you might as well have made this little sacrifice to her wishes. But, Madam, said I, permit me to observe that it is not a *little sacrifice*.—Well, but could you not have very easily prepared

another for the person this is destined ?—No one on earth shall ever possess it ? . . But you have said . . —That was a mere excuse . . ———How can you set so high a value on it ? . . The hand which sketched the original design, makes it invaluable in my estimation.—What ! can this be the one . . . . —That I found at Paris in the drawer of your dressing table, and to which I added a rose bud, copied from an artificial flower, still in my possession : and which I intend to preserve during the remainder of my life ; for it has been worn by *you* . . . . It was thus, that, carried away by the double imprudence of youth and passion, I suddenly disclosed, that which I had solemnly promised myself for ever to conceal. . . . Edelie remained silent for a few moments, and then said, in a faltering voice. —Well ! why this mystery ? . . . . . . The sketch pleased you, it was completed with a little addition . . and out of friendship towards me; you wish to keep it ? All this appears very simple, and I see no

harm whatever in it....—No! no, cried I, there is nothing *simple* in what I feel ....I would rather expose myself to your utmost anger and indignation, than let you suppose I entertain a vulgar sentiment towards you. Three years have elapsed since this secret has preyed on my mind, it has now escaped me in spite of myself: I am fully aware of all that I shall lose in betraying it, but I can only regret your esteem; your confidence would make me wretched, and your friendship has ruined me! Hear me, Julien, said Edelie with great emotion...No, I replied, I will hear nothing, I shall go and find out the Viscount, confide the whole to him, then immediately retire from the world into solitude.

It is impossible for language to describe the state of my feelings at this moment; the image of Eusebius stood between us, and never could a menacing spectre, presented to the most perturbed imagination, inspire more horror and alarm......I was about to hurry away

from the spot, but Edelie no less terrified than affected, detained me: If it be true, said she, that your misguided heart, possesses real honour, remain, I beg of you ; endeavour, for the sake of your own character as well as mine, to stifle and conceal those sentiments ; be calm, therefore, let us return to the house, but take care to be here again at this hour to-morrow, when I intend to give you a letter that will explain the conditions upon which you may still retain my esteem.—I will obey you, said I, unable any longer to restrain my tears.—Ah ! Julien, rejoined Edelie, show me that you have some empire over yourself, when my reputation demands it. At these words she proceeded towards the house, and having made an effort to conceal my feelings, I followed her into the drawing room, where I behaved in such a manner as to prove that her wishes were not forgotten ; I did not approach her during the remainder of the evening, which I passed in the billiard-room. As I expected a letter

from Edelie, and there was neither anger or disdain in her looks, when I made the imprudent avowal of my sentiments, I did not, as yet, give way to my reflections on the critical situation in which I had placed myself; at length the ardently wished for hour arrived: soon after I reached the terrace, Edelie came, and giving me the promised letter, desired I would read it in my own room. I instantly flew there, and breaking the seal with a trembling hand, read as follows:

—"You have commited a great fault, which would soon have degenerated into a crime, if I had been so weak as to participate in such a guilty sentiment, or so criminal as to acknowledge it: in supposing that this sentiment had remained a secret, how would you have supported the betrayed confidence, and usurped esteem of my brother? your own remorse and mine? But nothing escapes the penetrating malice of the world; and, had I ceded, it would have judged me without indulgence; people look for a certain

degree of *decorum*, even in vice itself, they expect it in the most illegitimate unions: in fact, moral disorder shocks them less than *discordance* in domestic bonds.— It is here they discover that ridicule, for which there is no pity, because, to be avoided, it seldom requires any thing more than address and manner, while principles and firmness are necessary to secure us against the seduction of the passions.

"You are adopted by our family, and form a part of it; an advantage which is exclusively due to the opinion my brother was taught to entertain of your sentiments and attachment towards himself: but until time and your merit has enabled you to acquire a fortune, the world neither will or can see any thing more than the *secretary* of Eusebius in you!....From these reflections, you may form a tolerable judgment of what you have to depend on.—So far however, from giving yourself up to the violent despair, which alarmed me so

much yesterday, let this moment of error for ever strengthen you in the sacred path of virtue!....Why should we be discouraged when all can be repaired?..... Do you imagine that the play-fellow of my infancy, and the dearest friend of my brother can be an object of indifference?....You are a second brother for me, and it is thus I wish to be considered .... You do not wish me to suppose that you entertain a vulgar sentiment towards me: be it so! I am convinced that I have unlimited power over you, and shall therefore begin to exersise a portion of it, by giving you the following peremptory orders: you are instantly to inform my sister-in-law, that a letter, just received from the Viscount, together with directions which must be given, on his estate, oblige you to return there very early to-morrow morning; to depart at day-break; to redouble your activity in study; to acquire increased knowledge, and improve all your talents; finally, to seek for an amiable and vir-

tuous companion, whom you are to marry in three or four years. From this time forwards, and till that event takes place, you will only visit our house two or three times a year; and when you are sure of finding other strangers there: but you are not to come here any more; you must absolutely avoid every occasion of meeting me, and never on any account, express a syllable either by speaking, writing, or any other indirect method, which can remind me of a sentiment that wounds my honour, and which must shock every woman of virtue. Reflect, also, that it will destroy those ties of honorable friendship by which we are now bound, if your virtue does not triumph!.. Having thus declared my commands, I promise, on my part, to retain the most faithful regard for you, and all the confidence of sincere esteem, which shall be proved, in consulting you, by a written communication, whenever I may be in want of virtuous counsel; convinced before hand, that, in order to give me

such, you will only consult my reputation, tranquillity and happiness. Although volatile in character, I am not destitute of feeling: capable of judging on that which concerns others, I cannot do so in what regards myself; this always appears to require a degree of egotism, for thus occupied, we can only think of ourselves, it is therefore a kind of study, which I find insupportable, I prefer directing my attention to objects of which I am totally ignorant, for they gratify my curiosity at least, and that is in many respects extremely great. Assist me, therefore, in becoming more perfect; an object which will, I trust, give you an additional interest in life. Should you hear any thing said against me, that I ought be informed of, let it be communicated in a note: but take care your letters are neither flattering or complimentary, and that they do not contain any particular expressions of regard; for, however purely defined, they will desplease me: whereas a serious and well-founded remonstrance, and

good advice plainly given, is sure to excite my utmost gratitude. The more laconic and severe you are, the more satisfied shall I be of my influence over your reason and affections.--Adieu. If this letter does not betray an act of imprudence, that is to say, if, as I believe you are worthy of receiving such a one, and know how to appreciate the intention of her who wrote it, you will feel both joy and exultation in fulfilling the conditions it imposes; while you may consider the writer as a friend, the most sincere and devoted."

I will not attempt to describe the effect produced in my mind by the perusal of the foregoing letter; it contained all that could change the most obstinate purpose, served to reanimate my drooping courage, and reconcile me to myself: viewing it in this light, no wonder if I determined to justify her confidence, and obey her injunctions. This resolution was no sooner formed, than I sat down and wrote the following answer:

" I swear, by all that is most sacred,

to obey you scrupulously, and in whatever you require." ———

The coldnes and brevity of this note did me no harm in the estimation of Edelie: it was a specimen of the obedience which she prescribed, and I knew how justly she would appreciate this first proof of my submission......—I consigned the above note to her on the same evening; and announced my intended departure to the Viscountess, who, with her usual indifference, took no notice of the circumstance, nor asked me a single question as to its cause: pursuant to the arrangements of the preceding night, I therefore left Count Joseph's house before sun rise on the following morning.

CHAP. III.

Julien's new occupation.—Return of the Viscount.

ALTHOUGH I felt the utmost regret at quitting Edelie's society so suddenly; it was a great consolation to reflect that she knew my sentiments. The truth is, I felt myself passionately attached to her, and determined to merit her good opinion, if not esteem, by my future conduct. There was a great degree of originality both in the mind and character of Edelie: she united, as it were, simplicity and imprudence to reason; good nature to pride; the utmost gaiety to the keenest sensibility. Although not so perfect as her friend, the Duchess de Palmis, nothing could exceed the generosity of her sentiments, and justice of her reflections, particularly when not carried away by her natural vivacity. If not personally con-

cerned, the peculiar turn of Edelie's mind, would lead to her viewing only the agreeable or ridiculous side of a question; her imagination was by no means romantic: in society she manifested a sprightliness the most ingenuous, and a degree of playful animation that rendered her truly amiable; yet, with all these qualities, she possessed uncommon elevation of mind and character; there was, in fact, greatness and heroism displayed in all the important actions of her life.

Even the passion I entertained for her, supported me in the painful sacrifices imposed by the letter, at least I had an object in view, and that gave rise to a better founded hope, than any thing else could inspire, since its success, in this instance, depended on my own wishes and future conduct.—Arriving at my destination, I devoted all my time to the study of history, the arts, and general literature. There was in this old mansion, like all the others of that day, an excellent library composed of useful books, in which real

erudition was to be found. The works it contained were chiefly written during the two preceding centuries, and, as the authors of that epoch wrote from the dictates of conscience, their writings are the fruits of deep study. Their object was not to amuse the idle and malignant, but to instruct the rational and well disposed. I read for at least three hours each day, made extracts, drew, and practised a little music, for having found an old harpsichord in the drawing room, I sent to Rouen for a person to put it in tune, and from not forgetting the lessons of Mademoiselle de Versec, many days had not elapsed before I could accompany my voice in several songs.—I had also brought my guitar from Paris, and did not fail occasionally to enliven a half hour with that, in going over some of Edelie's favourite romances. I wished for the arrival of Eusebius, and yet I dreaded the event; however, after much reflection, I determined on confiding every thing to him; besides the habit of

unreserved communication that had subsisted so long between us, I thought there would be generosity in thus opening my heart, and becoming, my own accuser, at the very moment he persisted in concealing an important secret from me. On the other hand, the happiness of talking of Edelie, and the pleasure I derived from dwelling on my admiration of her character, vanquished all the fear inspired by the Viscount's probable severity.

The Vicountess returned in a fortnight after my departure, from Count Joseph's, and her husband came on the following day. I found him extremely dejected, but much more tranquillized than when he departed for the capital. I had sent him two very mysterious letters, which excited great curiosity on his part; but he told me, that he considered himself as having no longer any right to interrogate me. You will always, said I, have that of knowing what passes in my mind, I have committed an act of great indiscretion and am

about to make some painful avowals to you ; but shall, in the first place, implore your indulgence, which I am too unfortunate not to obtain. After the above preamble, I minutely and faithfully detailed all that had happened, and not wishing to make him the depositary of only a part, I produced Edelie's letter. He heard me out very calmly, though with considerable emotion. He then read his sister's epistle, and although evidently affected by the perusal, I could plainly see he did not approve of her writing it. The mischief was however done, so that he now only thought how to take advantage of it for our mutual benefit. You have condemned yourself so freely, said he, that it would be extremely pedantic to attempt adding any thing more to what my sister has said on the subject; but I must say, it is rather strange, that Edelie should have chosen the moment in which you betrayed so much imprudence, and so little power over yourself to become your mentor....——It arose most probably from her forseeing the

effect her confidence would produce on me.—Yes, said Eusebius and I am sure you will not fail to justify it.—You may rely on me, said I, nor shall I ever write to her except for the purpose of tendering useful advice; I also promise never to send a line without having previously submitted it to your own inspection.——I know your sincerity, my dear Julien, and your word has more weight with me than the most convincing proofs; but, continued he, this epistolary communication will be altogether new. People generally exhaust panegyric on women, particularly on those they like; flattery with the sex is nothing more than gallantry; but here, you are constituted a *censor* and *preacher* without being able to mix a single expression of kindness or friendship in your lessons..——As to that, said I, the order was quiet unnecessary, I should have made a rule of interdicting myself from ever introducing a passionate phrase of any kind.....With such a woman, I prefer a tone of dignified *inflexibility*, to being cold and common

place, at these words Eusebius smiled, and squeezing my hand, said, Ah ! Julien, we must only deplore the caprice of destiny, and the tyranny of social compacts !. . . . Had it not been for the unnatural cruelty of these, I should have been permitted to name a brother-in-law, for the happiness of a beloved sister as well as my own ; in which case, it is most assuredly not Count Joseph, that I would have chosen !. . . . . . The Viscount pronounced the last sentence in so affecting an accent, that it penetrated to my very soul, and the only reply I could make was that of pressing his hand closely to my heart. After a short interval of silence, Eusebius renewed the conversation, by saying : You know my opinion of nobility, and I shall always consider the illustrious names and glorious traditions of those who have composed it, as deserving respect and meriting distinctions in the state ; but I am not the less shocked to see personal merit so often go for nothing, while want of birth is purchased

not by virtue and talents, but by money alone. For instance, if a banker, whose father was a *Porter*, marries his daughter to a Lord, or a female of high birth espouses a rich plebeian, the world approves of such alliances; but, should any one at Court become acquainted with a young man, who happens to have no fortune, though he be amiable, virtuous and well educated, and ventured to give him his daughter, after having put both their inclinations to the test, he would be universally accused of having committed an act of the greatest degradation. So that, people do not lower themselves by giving up a child for the sake of money, or sacrificing her to views of ambition, while they are guilty of a crime in marrying her to one whose manners, principles, mind and character they most esteem!......Would it be possible to cite a more odious prejudice! But, my dear Julien, continued he, let us be resigned to evils that are without any remedy!......The wisest counsel Edelie could have given you, was that of seeking an amiable companion

and uniting yourself to her, an object which I shall promote with real pleasure. In the mean time, we must quit this country for a few years, I am too young as yet, to expect an embassy, but, notwithstanding the contrary practice, I think an aprenticeship in this as well as every other profession, cannot fail to be extremely useful; I shall therefore ask, and no doubt obtain an inferior mission to one of the Princes of Italy or Germany; we shall depart together, when time, distance and occupation, will restore that internal peace of mind, which may be lost in a moment, though so extremely difficult to regain.*

* Some years before the Revolution, a nobleman, at Court, showed the good example of beginning his diplomatic career, by accepting one of those missions that were then called *subaltern*, and which before his appointment, had only been given to obscure individuals, who were called *Chargés d'Affaires*, or *Consuls;* these were generally persons of merit, and many of them obtained titles as well as the appointment of plenipotentiaries, by their talents and services.

CHAP. IV.

Julien's return to Paris.—Commencement of his Correspondence with Edelie.—Affecting proof of her friendship towards him.—His intimacy with Tiburtius.—Confidence placed in him by the latter.—Continuation of his Correspondence with Edelie.

EUSEBIUS next required that I would never speak to him about Edelie, except I had something indispensable to communicate or a note to show him. I murmured a little at this, observing that I thought it very hard he should not only deny his own confidence, but reject mine. He then told me with his accustomed mildness, that people never conquered a culpable passion, if they continued to be always dwelling on it, in their conversation; yet, nearly all we had together

used to turn on unfortunate attachments, and Eusebius was easily led away by the secret charm which he seemed to find in such subjects; we did not return to Paris until a few days before the christmas holydays.—On arriving there, I went to my mother's, and found her husband more brutal and a greater drunkard than ever, a circumstance that afflicted me no less on her account, than that of poor Casilda, who was, by this time, a charming girl, both as to person and character; I had given her a few lessons in drawing, and so far from having lost ground by my absence, she made a considerable progress without any assistance whatever from others, showing a rare disposition for learning at her age, and which I determined to cultivate. I also paid a visit to my uncle on the same day; Matilda was out, so that I remained alone with him for above two hours. Although he did not entirely open his heart to me, I heard enough to convince me he was at length aware of

his wife's conduct and irregularities. I sympathized most heartily with him, for I was really attached to my uncle, and never, for one moment, forgot all I owed to his bounty. The troubles which we bring on ourselves, are by far the most sorrowful; the hardened and insensible who dispense with pitying us, in such cases, would make us hate reason, if we did not know that wisdom is false, or at least without merit, when deficient in benevolence and sensibility. Let us, therefore, doubly lament those evils which are caused by imprudence and credulity! Since they are the most cutting! I certainly had no right to repeat those chilling phrases to my poor uncle, which are so frequently employed on similar occasions: *I told you this would be the case! I warned you of it! it is all your own fault, &c.* but I might have hinted to him, that he had sacrificed me to an artful woman, and that I only remained silent out of respect to himself; I did not, however, say a word on the subject; for every reproach, no mat-

ter how well founded or gently made, is odious when addressed to those who require consolation. I left him with my heart aching for his situation, and was the more afflicted, from its being so easy to foresee that every day would render his condition still worse.

In the mean time I waited, or rather passionately wished for an opportunity of giving some useful hints to Edelie, as I had no other means of bringing myself to her remembrance. I interrogated Mademoiselle de Versec, who was always intimately acquainted with the affairs of the family, and she told me that, although people praised the regular conduct of Edelie, they, at the same time, thought she was too fond of shewing the small degree of esteem in which she held her husband, and that she spoke too lightly of her mother and father-in-law. My authority entered into the minutest details while dwelling on these little circumstances; when I had collected a sufficient quantity of materials, I began

my first note to Edelie, and after tearing up about a dozen, for I was never satisfied with the degree of *severity* they contained, I finally determined to send her the following:

"People approve highly of your prudent conduct in society, but they condemn the levity with which you speak of your husband and his relatives; several of your remarks on them are openly cited. Gaiety has no longer any charm, particularly in a woman, when it clashes with duty and decorum. Although the world may smile when you are indulging in these sallies, it does not disapprove of them the less.— Reflect, that the respectability of a wife entirely depends on that of her husband, or on the esteem in which he is held. Whenever she speaks lightly, even in the most trifling things, she commits a species of infidelity; for the sanctity of her vow interdicts every kind of complaint or raillery at his expence."

I showed the above gallant note to the Viscount, who laughed heartily at its laco

nic and formal style, but praised me for its candour and *conscientious* sincerity; adding, that the contents were perfectly correct, and that Edelie had in reality great need of such a lesson. As I did not like to send my note, for fear of its falling into other hands, I requested the Viscount to undertake delivering it himself, but he declined doing so; observing, I do not reject your confidence, Julien, because I am sure you will always act correctly, but I have formed the determination of never mentioning your name to my sister. You will, however, meet her at my mother's, and by calling there on new year's day you may then deliver the note yourself. This refusal obliged me to retain it for three days longer, till at length meeting Edelie at her mother's house, I took advantage of a favorable moment, and slipped the billet into her hand, unobserved by the rest of the company; she took it with avidity and removed to another part of the room. I retired altogether a

few moments after. Next day I received the following answer by the penny-post.

" I am much pleased with your note, and return you a thousand thanks; continue." — This reply filled me with transport, proving that Edelie persisted in requiring unreserved frankness on my part, and that she thought me worthy of her confidence, such sentiments made her an incomparable woman in my eyes; for who is there, that in the bloom of youth and splendour of fashion, either attends to truth when told, or seeks for it divested of flattery and persuasion?

Two days after the above circumstance, I took Casilda to her god-mother, the Marchioness d'Inglar, for the purpose of paying the compliments of the season, and presenting a fine head she had just drawn; Edelie had already arrived, and, on our going in, observed that my sister was amazingly improved, she also spoke very highly of Casilda's rising talents and paid her the most flattering attentions. On

the next day, she accompanied me to Count Joseph's, where we found a number of other morning visitors, all of whom admired little Casilda excessively. Edelie loaded her with presents, and on our coming away, gave me a roll of music, saying with a smile, here is the romance you asked me for six months ago, I have kept it for a new year's gift. As I had not made any such request, it occurred to me that the roll must enclose a letter; on getting into the hackney-coach, which brought us to the house, I hastened to open it, and, in effect, found what I expected: pretending to Casilda that the paper only contained the words of the song, I read what follows:

"I am delighted with Casilda, and if your mother will let her come to me, I will joyfully undertake to superintend her education, which will serve to occupy me usefully, while it completes your object of rendering me prudent and rational. So that what I now demand is a real

piece of service, and with the entire approbation of Count Joseph."—

This note affected me almost to tears; but, previous to taking any steps with my mother, I consulted Eusebius, who replied, that, as Count Joseph had given his consent, I could not refuse a proposal that was so advantageous for Casilda, and that it was very desirable she should be removed from the scene of those bad examples continually furnished by the irregularities and bad conduct of her father.

I then wrote to Edelie, but it was now merely to thank her; I endeavoured to express only my gratitude, and yet, the Viscount thought the note couched in such tender terms, that he made me write it over again several times, and when sufficiently frigid in his opinion, for the whole was completely altered, he assured me nothing could be more perfect.—It was then forwarded, and I next proceeded to negociate for Casilda's removal with my mother, who, although greatly

afflicted at the idea of being separated from her child, nevertheless consented without hesitation to the proposed change. As to my unworthy parent, the only benefit he saw in it, arose from the expence that would be saved, and which he complained bitterly of, as often as my mother bought a yard of linen, or a pair of shoes for the child; but wishing to profit by the desire I had to procure a good education for my sister, he declared that he would only give up his *rights as a father*, on condition that he should instantly receive a thousand crowns in ready money: this act of baseness confounded me to such a degree, that I knew not how to reply, and therefore remained silent. He added that it was not just to separate him from his daughter, without he gained something by it; this he called possessing the *feelings of a parent*. It was perfectly useless to dispute this sort of paternal tenderness with him, and I was at last induced to say, he should have the money in a few days. He replied, that Madam

the Marchioness *d'Inglar, god-mother of his little one*, and Madam the Countess de Velmas could, each, very easily give fifteen hundred francs; as the whole of that family were so *well off* that such a trifling sum *would do no harm whatever to them*. When he had terminated his speech, I took my leave, and had scarcely got six paces from the door when he called me back, for the purpose of telling me that, in addition to the money already named, there must be a *complete new stock of clothes* bought for the child, as she was by no means *smart enough* to be always in the company of such *high flying ladies*, and that besides, when she quitted the house, her old clothes belonged *by rights* to the maid, Mademoiselle Lisey. I told him, in great haste, that Casilda should have what he mentioned, and hurried away lest he might attempt to make any fresh demands. I returned home quite in despair, for it will be readily imagined I had no idea of communicating such propositions to my protectors. How

keenly did I repent of not being more economical ! I had only a hundred and fifty francs of the money in my desk ! I thought there would be no difficulty in procuring the clothes on credit : but where was the thousand crowns to come from ?......Casilda was not a relation of my uncle's, so that there was no use in addressing him : I therefore pledged every thing of any value I possessed, the whole of which only enabled me to raise twelve hundred francs, whereas eighteen hundred more were required to make up the sum, I therefore had recourse to an usurer, and at the end of six day's torment and annoyance, realized my thousand crowns......It now remained to prepare the clothes, and addressing myself to three linen drapers, for that purpose, they positively refused giving me any credit ; while despairing of success, in this object, and totally at a loss how to get over the embarrassment it occasioned, a message came from Mademoiselle de Versec saying, she wanted to see me. On

obeying the summons, and after the usual salutations, she observed, you must know Mr. Delmour, that I am charged with a commission for you: the Marchioness d'Inglar is desirous of making a handsome present to her god-daughter, and has accordingly deputed me to prepare it. Now, as from the directions I received, there are several articles not made up, this supply will serve till she reaches the age of fifteen or sixteen. At these words, she went to a large trunk, and, on opening it, pointed to a beautiful dress together with several pieces of muslin, linen and stuffs for common wear.

It struck me at the moment that Eusebius had, in his mother's name, paid for three-fourths of this splendid present, and I was not deceived: he heard my acknowledgements with that delicacy which so greatly enhanced all his actions; charmed to find the object of my exertions thus achieved, I flew to the rue des Lombards with my thousand crowns, and a complete suit for Casilda, having previously

sent all the other things to Edelie. No sooner did my mother receive the parcel than she immediately dressed out her daughter in its contents. Simon included all the presents I had made to Casilda during the last six years, in what he called her *old stock*, and I had consequently the extreme mortification of seeing them transferred to the greedy hands of Mademoiselle Lisey. The only articles Casilda was allowed to retain, consisted of a small gold watch and chain, received from her god-mother: I need scarcely add that my father-in-law's eyes brightened on receiving the money; having next put on his Sunday clothes, he entered the vehicle which I had hired to convey Casilda and my mother to Edelie, who received her with open arms. Our visit was very short, for I could not bear the exposure to which the sentimental speeches, prepared for the occasion by Simon, subjected us all. We left Casilda bathed in tears, nothwithstanding all the caresses of Edelie, and neither these or the

presents and fine dresses could appease her for more than a month afterwards. I passed the whole of the evening at my mother's, where three bottles of Sillery and a large liver patty had arrived by my orders: a precaution which induced Simon to ask me to dinner with a very good grace. I had stolen a fine piece of muslin, and seven yards of blue satin out of Casilda's present, for my mother, and shortly after my presenting it, she began to congratulate herself on the success of her daughter. Although I did not repeat my visits to Edelie, the Viscount frequently gave me an account of Casilda.

Towards the close of the winter, Tiburtius, who often came to see me, entered my room one morning in a state of great agitation, I asked the cause of his uneasiness, when, after a number of remarks without connection or meaning, he candidly confessed that he was over head and ears in love. As he was not more than eighteen years of age, I began to rally him about this sudden attack, and what was

my surprize to hear, that he had been passionately attached to the same object ever since the age of fourteen, and who should it be but the Marchioness de Palmis! What! said I, in love with the wife of your uncle! can you possibly think of such a thing?—Certainly I can, for I think of nothing else.---Well, so much the worse, my dear Tiburtius, for the passion is absolutely inexcusable.——My uncle, weary of every thing, *indifferent to all*, weighed down by old age, inconstant as a child, and tired of the world, is completely insensible to the happiness of being united to one of the most beautiful women in Europe: he is at this moment not anxious to know what I am thinking about, or how his wife is occupied, but passes his time in collecting all the broken porcelain, chinese images and jars, in a small cabinet.—But seriously, my dear friend, you must shake off an attachment that is no less extravagant than criminal....——People do not wish to be cured, before they suffer....—What!

does she love you then ?—No, but she will ; I have plenty of time before me, and can wait.——I wish it was possible to make you listen to reason. . .Pray, renounce this sensless passion.—I tell you, it has turned my brain. . . .—And does she know it ?——I have endeavoured to express my feelings in a thousand different ways during the last three months ; when she laughs at me, I assume a tragic tone ; if she gets angry, I then joke with her till her good humour returns. She has, of her own accord, politely dismissed Count Joseph, and I have exacted a promise, that she will get rid of that ass de Solmire, in the same way, which she would not consent to, till I had made use of the most impertinent persuasions.—So much the worse, he is mischievous, and will become her enemy.—I say so much the better, for I can then be revenged for her sake. This last sentiment, of Tiburtius, convinced me how dangerous it is, for a woman who has any regard for her reputation, not pe-

remptorily, to check in its commencement, the advances and inclinations of all, particularly those at my young friend's age. I foresaw, from this moment, that Tiburtius, in spite of all my sermons and advice, would seriously compromise the Marchioness; and the event but too truly justified my fears. In effect, the Marquis de Solmire told some persons, confidentially, that he was sure Madam de Palmis encouraged Tiburtius as a lover, and this calumny began to be whispered about amongst his friends: yet it appeared so strange, that a woman only twenty-one, who had frequented the great world for four years, and until then continued irreproachable, should receive a boy of eighteen, and the nephew of her husband, as a lover. Though this story was at first considered as an absurd fable, it had the effect of making people observe the Marchioness and Tiburtius when they were together in society: incredulity, where the faults of others are concerned, is seldom of long duration: the slightest

incident being enough to shake and even destroy it altogether.

I used occasionally to visit a farmer-general's house, where the supper-parties were rendered extremely agreeable by the enlightened taste of the host and hostess, particularly in music. They received the best company, and amongst others the Marchioness de Palmis often visited there, she frequently took a part in the favourite game of proverbs*, and with so much success that the other female visitors would no longer venture to play with her, and she thought it so awkard to be the only woman who joined in the game, that she persuaded Edelie to accompany her, contriving to make the latter believe that she possessed a wonderful talent in this way, which was by no means the case. I was accidently present at this *début* of the Countess,

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* A species of extempore comedy, in which the sense implied by any given adage, is regularly performed by any one who chuses to assume a part.

and suffered greatly on her account, for she played very badly and with too much confidence: affecting those pretentions to natural ease which she knew herself to possess, and which had so great a charm in society, because, when there, she did not think of them, but in playing proverbs, she exceeded herself, by the way of rendering them more brilliant; her sallies now wanted grace and were misplaced, while her vivacity was affected and monotonous. The perfection of Madam de Palmis in this game, her refined finesse, witty and animated dialogue, occasioned me the utmost chagrin, on comparing it with Edelie who was almost ridiculous at her side, but so far from thinking so, she considered their success quite equal. I was seated near a group of ladies who were in a low tone depreciating Edelie's efforts to shine in the game, for I heard every word that passed. After the proverbs, two or three friends of the Marchioness, secretly engaged by her to compliment Edelie, came

to tell her she had played like an angel; and to crown all, she was made completely the dupe of this flattery, which served to irritate me beyond expression, carrying my ill humour to its height. Tiburtius also played in these proverbs, and with infinite gracefulness; it was easy to perceive how deeply he had become enamoured of the Marchioness who, on her side, appeared to regard him here as she would any other boy, though it was evident she thought *this boy* very handsome and amiable.

On returning home, the present seemed a good opportunity of giving Edelie another useful piece of advice, and I therefore wrote her the following note:

"You are a dupe to the perfidious self-love of Madam de Palmis, who merely wants a companion to play in the proverbs. She possesses that trifling talent in a supreme degree, whereas you do not; those women who envy you in other respects, bitterly criticise you for a pretention that is ill founded. Cease,

therefore to betray a misapplied complaisance, and which, to say the least, is, in every respect, subject to great inconvenience."

Eusebius highly approved of this warning, and observed, smiling, that he was anxious to see what answer she would send. I received one the same day, which was in the following terms:

" I have entire confidence in you, in all that relates to morality; but you have not a sufficient knowledge of the world to know what is *misplaced* or not. I did not ask you to remind me of *my defects*; and must tell you, that I have none in playing proverbs: people whose taste, in this respect, is more formed than yours, assure me, that I have neither comparison or rivalry to apprehend in that line. But since we are on these frivolous topics, I will give you, a little piece of advice; people often laugh at, and ridicule the grotesque way in which you imitate the style and manner of my brother, even to the tone of his voice. Confine yourself

to an imitation of his conduct and virtues; really, to *ape* the external part of any one's demeanour, is considered as the acme of absurdity, and you have, very generally, the credit of doing so."

This reply, in which mortification and wounded self-love are so clearly expressed, by no means surprized Eusebius, but it certainly astonished me not a little, though nothing ever gave me a greater insight into the character of women. There are, in fact, many of the sex who freely receive the severest advice as to their moral character and conduct, but how few will listen to counsel, that, in diminishing any of their pretentions, wounds their vanity! both the Viscount and myself enjoyed a hearty laugh, however, at the *warning* of Edelie; it was a little revenge she had determined on, supposing my self-love would be humbled, but in this she was deceived, for I was so attached to Eusebius, that it delighted me to find people thought I wished to make him the model of my address and manners.

CHAP. IV.

A Duel and its consequences.—Julien's new Amours.

NOTWITHSTANDING her private pique against me, Edelie reflected on the advice I had given her. She again performed in the proverbs, but with more caution, and only once, having soon found a pretext for discontinuing it altogether.

The injurious reports, however, which Solmire circulated against the reputation of Madam de Palmis, gained so much credit, that they even reached Tiburtius, who, immediately, went to demand an explanation from him. The result of this interview, which unfortunately took place in the presence of witnesses, was a duel. They fought with so much rancour on the occasion, that both were dangerously wounded. Tiburtius received the first

thrust; but determined to continue the contest, he soon after plunged his sword into his adversary. Tiburtius was carried bleeding and senseless to the residence of his father; but the surgeons, who were immediately called in, pronounced that his life was not in danger, although the wound was severe, and he had lost a great quantity of blood. This affair made a great noise at Paris, and caused considerable agitation in the Inglar family. Solmire, being brother to the Viscountess, the whole family was naturally interested in this affair; the Marchioness d'Inglar loudly blamed Madam de Palmis, as the cause of the duel; Mademoiselle de Versec was outrageous; all the ladies, long envious of her beauty; the talents and admiration bestowed on so brilliant an object, could not restrain their rage, and jealousy. It was asserted, almost universally, in the fashionable circles, that Madam de Palmis saw the progress of the young Baron's criminal passion with pleasure, and even encou-

raged it; that she had, in fact, urged him to fight, and *promised every thing* if he would but revenge her on de Solmire. Many persons added, that the latter had been her lover for some months, that she had abandoned him for Tiburtius, whom they reproached as not only unsuitable from his age, but from the ties of kindred which would have rendered such an association odious even to the most profligate. There was not the least truth in the above; up to this period Madam de Palmis was still virtuous; she had never given any hopes to Tiburtius; but she ought to have treated him with that coldness which would have at once *effectually prohibited them*: an omission that ruined her. She was not ignorant of what the world said against her: malicious innuendos and anonymous letters gave her complete intelligence on the subject, she was thus rendered irreconcilable with society, which is the greatest misfortune that can well befall a young and beautiful woman. When there is

an appeal from an unjust sentence, it is wrong to provoke the judges intentionally, and equally imprudent to irritate them beyond a chance of reconciliation. The public should not be held in defiance, nor is it proper pusilanimously to shrink under the lash of its calumny; proud and arrogant contempt is blamable, even though produced by injustice; it is necessary that a proper degree of feeling should be evinced in every situation, especially among females; where fortitude, combined with moderation and mildness united with spirit, is peculiarly essential. The first shafts of calumny always come home to the feelings and cut deeply; but they are blunted and without effect, when aimed at former wounds: Madam de Palmis acted on a wrong principle, that of affecting a disdainful haughtiness, which did not even avail her in disguising the most violent resentment. Without betraying the secret of the attachment of Tiburtius for her, and mantaining, on the contrary, that he

only professed a fraternal affection, she recounted the whole of this adventure to her husband; who, convinced of her innocence and that of his nephew, broke out in extravagant praise of the latter for having so bravely defended *the honor of his uncle* and family, against a coxcomb and slanderer. Madam de Palmis not only manifested friendship, but enthusiasm towards Tiburtius on this occasion, and for an act which, of all others, ought to have given her the greatest pain. The barbarous prejudice, as absurd as irreligious, which authorises duelling, does not deserve approbation, at least from females, who are justly expected to regard it with horror. Madam de Palmis shocked every one by the triumphant airs she assumed on this melancholy occasion: she attended Tiburtius as a nurse, constantly appearing in his chamber during three weeks. When all alarm for the fate of Solmire had ceased, I went to visit Tiburtius, who, reclining on a sofa, began to receive his friends again. I

found in his apartment Madam de Palmis, the Duchess her sister-in-law, and the Marquis de Palmis, which surprized me extremely; in speaking of Tiburtius, I heard him often repeat *brave lad! brave lad!* and with such a serious and solemn tone, that it excited my risibility, especially when I looked at the *brave lad*, who, with eyes fixed on the Marchioness de Palmis, saw none but her in the room. contemplating her with the most languishing expression of countenance. To me, it appeared that the Marchioness was deeply in love, while Tiburtius had become a most dangerous Hero of Romance for her. The Duchess was very silent, and I remarked a slight tinge of gravity on her amiable features; it was also evident to perceive that there was great coolness between her and the Marchioness.

When Tiburtius was sufficiently recovered to go out, he came to return my visits. He required a confidant, that is to say, some one to whom he could open his mind; no pressing was therefore necessary

to obtain his secrets. He informed me that, five or six days after his duel, when alone one morning, with the Marchioness, he had availed himself of her emotion and gratitude, to extract an acknowledgement of the most tender sentiments from her. But, continued he, it was necessary to have recourse to a bold expedient, I threatened to tear off the dressings from my wounds: for I had read that, in some novels, and the Abbé Aillet will no longer have reason to accuse me of not profiting by my studies, that an oath was required even to love, the most pure, prudent, and platonic; I was, therefore, promised that mine would be partaken. This is pretty well, at your age, said I.— — Always harping at my age!—why, I was full nineteen two days before the meeting took place: when a person enters into his twentieth year, he is, I should imagine, *quite a man*———But there is nothing in your manner that indicates excessive love.——I love in my own way, as she does in hers.——You have com-

mitted an irreparable injury against the character of this poor woman!....—— Not at all, when husbands are content, every one else should be so. It is true that the Abbé, on the authority of the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans, in short of all antiquity, has been very severe on my duel; my father has also scolded, and my step-mother lectured me in private; but she has, at the same time, pacified my father, and my uncle is delighted at this proof of my attachment *to him*. Thus I have not disturbed his domestic tranquillity; be assured, therefore, continued he laughing, that this high flying morality of yours shall not restrain me....——Why so, I then asked?—— Are you not also deeply in love, and loved in return?——By whom, pray?—.. In spite of all your dissimulation, your secrets are known; every one at Mondor's has observed your intimacy with the Countess de Velmas....——These words confounded and irritated me to an inexpressible degree, and had not

Tiburtius been more prudent than myself, we should have instantly fought; fortunately, he succeeded in appeasing my anger, particularly on assuring me that, what he had just said. was merely the result of his own private observation. I suspected, although he would not acknowledge it, that Madam de Palmis had given him some hints on the subject, and from that instant I conceived a decided aversion to her, which I retained long after. I now endeavoured to persuade Tiburtius he was totally mistaken, but could only do so, by protesting that I was in love with another, I mentioned a young widow, a relation of Mondor's, who supped almost every evening at his house as the object. Her name was Zenayda, she was about twenty-eight, extremely beautiful and very rich, her late husband was a farmer-general and had been dead two years. Tiburtius told me I ought to make a point of marrying her, and that all my friends would no doubt unite to influence her agreeing to the match.

I replied that I had not the slighest reason to hope, nor could I, without the most ridiculous presumption. aspire to such a large fortune.

However, notwithstanding all my *modesty* and the unfortunate flame that had been already kindled in my breast, the idea of Tiburtius did not appear to me as altogether chimerical, and I resolved, at least, to make an attempt in the business. Should I confess it? my love for Edelie was rather weakened at Mondor's, by seeing her play so badly at proverbs, and in observing her ridiculed by several of the company. How true it is that love depends on trifles, especially in our own sex! with which it is solely nourished by vain illusions! How imprudent and unthinking therefore, must not those women be, who attach their destinies to a sentiment so fragile!...... Besides, on re-perusing Edelie's last note, I felt somewhat hurt; for its peculiar style, no longer brought to my mind the person whom I had once placed above all other

women. But I afterwards learnt that, notwithstanding certain little minded traits created by self-love, one may still possess greatness of soul. The truth is, I was not sorry to have an opportunity of wounding her vanity a little, and to discover, at the same time, if she really had any regard for me.

I therefore wrote to her for the purpose of relating a part of my conversation with Tiburtius, and to impart my suspicions concerning Madam de Palmis, also of my determination to *fall in love* with Zenayda! I waited her reply, with the utmost impatience, but got none for six days after, when I found it precisely as I wished, reserved, ill-natured, and containing many spiteful expressions against Zenayda. Edelie added to her age, pretending she was thirty-two, and accused her of being a coquette ; yet she concluded by telling me that she offered up the most sincere prayers for my success and happiness. I therefore continued my visits at Mondor's, and began to see Zenayda with considerable

emotion; in fact, I exerted myself to please her, and thought I succeeded. Zenayda, who was the daughter of an exchange broker, was not sufficiently high in rank to repel me, so that I felt no timidity in her presence; although I did not risk a positive declaration of love, I found a thousand ways of insinuating that I was completely enamoured. In this case, the woman who does not reject a suitor, attracts him more than ever; I therefore took courage, and this for a plain man, is as much to say, I was somewhat smitten. The more I saw Zenayda, the more amiable and attractive she appeared; she possessed, at the same time, a slight tint of coquettry, together with great frankness; and only desired to please, when satisfied that those, who addressed her, would be also agreeable. This species of sincerity, is, during courtship, the most dangerous kind of coquettry; it is that, we are apt to mistake for sentiment, accompanied as it is, by those simple impressions which have all the charms of truth. Zenayda without

artifice or cunning, by merely adopting a certain air of confidence, might deceive, but would never intentionally impose on any one. During the three weeks I frequented Mondor's suppers, I never met Edelie there, but often found Madam de Palmis and Tiburtius of the party. I soon observed that the Marchioness had sacrificed her virtue to him, and that the *platonic love* had even come to that *vulgar* conclusion which is the fate of *all love* that does not happen to be discouraged by women, at its first commencement, and which is once permitted to become the theme of their conversation. I remarked how much Madam de Palmis had fallen in the opinion of the world, by the cold politeness of the ladies, and the familiar style of the men, the attentions of the mistress of the house to her were also greatly diminished; in fact, every thing ought to have shown her, that she could no longer pretend to those involuntary and flattering proofs of esteem, she formerly enjoyed, and that she was

now merely treated with a studied and starched politeness. She had met calumny with contempt and haughtiness; and by way of being consistent, maintained her right to an impartial judgment with coolness and effrontery. This last plan was not so bad as the former. Having become criminal, she could only hope to change public opinion by means of hypocrisy, and it must be confessed that audacity, however odious, is still more effectual; it is a kind of grandeur in vice that contains no repentance, and which, to the observation of mankind, is not only devoid of insipidity, but removed from the last stage of baseness, provided some remains of decency and decorum be preserved. Tiburtius, when at Mondor's, really delighted me, by his exertions to interest Zenayda in my favour. I was the more obliged to him, because his friendly eulogiums had the desired effect in exciting her attention towards me.

One evening Mondor announced to

us that, on the next day but one, he intended to give a grand supper in honor of his wife's birth-day. I had a strong suspicion that Edelie would be invited; I was very anxious she should come, if only to see me in all *my glory*, and that I might enjoy the effect my new situation must produce on her mind. I wrote some verses for the festival, full of the usual compliments; I praised the graces and beauty of Madam Mondor, who was neither handsome, young, nor agreeable; I also made two or three puns, in a most flattering stile, on the name of her patroness (Sainte Reine); I did not omit to dedicate some lines (the extreme of elegant and delicate allusions) to the flowers in the bouquet I presented, *the Rose, the Lily and the Jessamine.* I compared Mondor to Mecænas; representing Plutus and Fortune radically cured of their blindness, and become the most sharp-sighted deities of Olympus; in short, I observed the rules established, in all ages, for this kind of composition,

when the question is to chaunt the praises of a woman and flatter any one, who can afford to give a good dinner.

It was late when I arrived at Mondor's, because Gardanne my hair-dresser, had made me wait for him a full hour, but the sonnet was in my pocket, and I carried my *emblematic* bouquet, together with a very fine cameo, taken from my portfolio, which represented *Time crowning Friendship*, and this line from Bernard, written underneath: " *Even time augments the lustre of her charms!*" The concert finished just as I entered. In an assembly you discover those who interest at the first glance: on going into the saloon, I immediately perceived Edelie and Zenayda, although they were at a considerable distance from each other: Tiburtius and Madam de Palmis were also there. He hastened to me, and said in his usual pleasing manner, a number of obliging things to relieve my embarrassment: I presented my bouquet to Madam Mondor, and then addressing myself to her

husband, I delivered the cameo which he received most graciously, upon which every one desired to see it; and it was accordingly handed round to the whole company. Amongst others Edelie eulogized it highly, and with a tone of kindness that affected me very much; Zenayda, also examined the design with great attention, and praised it in the highest terms. This was a degree of success in the first instance which I could never have expected. As the concert was at an end, Madam Mondor requested me to sing; and asking for a guitar, I sang my verses, and was applauded to the skies, both as a poet and musician; in fact, poetry when well sung, appears always good if not absolute nonsense. When supper was served, Zenayda made a sign for me to take the next seat. Edelie was placed opposite to me; and appeared somewhat absent, I frequently found her eyes directed towards me, she was so beautiful on this occasion, that my resolutions, with respect to the widow, were shook more

than once; nevertheless I affected great gaiety, and my conversation with Zenayda was conducted as usual in a strain of the utmost vivacity. I asked permission to pay my respects at her own house: after a moment's consideration, she granted it; but, as she was going to stay a couple of days in the country, my visit was put off till after her return, when she appointed an hour for my calling: I expected that she would receive me alone which I considered a good omen. A literary man, with whom I was not acquainted and who happened to be at the above supper, read a copy of verses during the dessert, which had been composed for the occasion, and which pleased me exceedingly; with the exception of the Marchioness de Palmis, there were very few persons present who had a taste for poetry, so that, had it not been for her and myself, those charming lines would have produced very little effect; but our opinions had weight, and drew those of many others with them, we therefore loudly

applauded the composer, in which the rest of the company followed us. The poet whose name was Florbel, was greatly obliged to me for my approbation, and from that moment became my friend. On rising from table, he went to recite some highly complimentary verses to the Marchioness de Palmis, and which he had just composed for her; immediately after he came to me, and endeavoured to repay my applause by praising my song, which he had however listened to with the utmost apathy, also the cameo which he had not even seen! Before supper, he had doubtless and with good reason, found that very indifferent poetry was not worthy of so much approbation, he therefore judged with severity: but subsequently, his opinion was more influenced by benevolence; thus it is that we are frequently partial without being wrong. How often should we not excuse the most glaring inconsistencies and even acts of injustice, if the circumstances, sentiments and mo-

tives, which produce them, were but known! After supper, the company assembled in the saloon, and while scattered in several small groups, I heard a proposal among them to play at Proverbs. Mr.*** the most ingenious man I had ever seen in this game, said that he had prepared the plan of one, in which he intended to act three characters, but that two ladies were required to support him. Madam de Palmis, who was immediately addressed for that purpose, complied without hesitation, and Edelie was intreated to take the other part; she consented almost as readily as the former, which vexed me very much; and determined not to see her in so very disadvantageous a situation, the victim of blind vanity, and misplaced condescension, I took the earliest opportunity of slipping away unobserved, it was in vain that Zenayda called me back, as I pretended not to hear her; I had however scarcely proceeded half through the antichamber, than I heard the voice of Edelie, pronouncing my name, and turning round,

I saw her approaching me ; on coming up she said, Julien I ought to be particularly obliged to you for the sacrifice you make, in quitting a party which must have been so agreeable to you, rather than witness my folly ; it also grieves me, that even the voice of her you love could not retain you.....Her I love? I interrupted with great surprize ; looking stedfastly at Edelie as I pronounced these words, she blushed, and I saw the utmost tenderness, depicted in her countenance, after a short pause : Return, she said; as, when the play is over, I have something to tell you ; I intreat you, to come back. On saying this, she hastened to leave me, and I re-entered the drawing room, with a degree of agitation which it was extremely difficult to conceal. I again sat down next to Zenayda, who told me she thought I had gone without intending to return ; I appeared to be hurt at this idea, and even complained of its *injustice*. The proverbs having now commenced, Edelie appear-

ed in the second scene, and I trembled as she advanced, but her acting, on this occasion, surprized me most agreeably; it was calm, natural, and graceful. She spoke with that unaffected elegance, which is so enchanting in woman, while it forms their chief ornament in society, she did not strain her voice above its natural tone, or proceed with that fatiguing volubility, which some players possess; Edelie no longer exhausted herself in vain attempts at brilliancy, she was in fact both witty and animated without appearing to aim at being either; she was consequently applauded with transport, and the astonishment of the company equalled their admiration. It need scarcely be added, that I was no less surprized than delighted at this unlooked for triumph. Madam de Palmis was, on the other hand, unintelligible to the whole party; although she played well, it was with a certain degree of negligence, however she seemed highly pleased at Edelie's success. After the

play we all surrounded the latter; but, interrupting our encomiums: nothing could be more easy, said she, as I have for the last fortnight rehearsed my part a hundred times at least, and by dint of study, succeeded in playing tolerably; this is the utmost praise I deserve. I inquired the great master's name from whom she had received her instructions: Madam de Palmis, she replied. This answer astonished every one, and especially the ladies who well know that a similar occurrence rarely happens among them. Edelie and the Marchioness, though extremely different in their conduct, were both far above the ordinary class of genius. Before she retired, Edelie delivered me a letter unperceived by the rest of the company, on which I immediately retired, anxious to reach home, and examine its contents; they were as follows:

"Being sure, after many rehearsals, that I should not appear ridiculous in the proverbs of this evening, I am desirous

to explain all that has occurred on the subject. Having, for the last three weeks, observed the general outcry which prevailed in the fashionable circles against the conduct of Madam de Palmis, I conceived that, although her behaviour to myself afforded just cause of complaint, it would be acting generously, on my part, to forget it in her present situation; besides, as nothing had been proved against her, it was my duty to suppose her innocent. To contribute towards the re-establishment in society and public opinion, of one who has become the victim of calumny, is the most noble prerogative of an unblemished reputation: I determined, therefore, to avail myself of it; and called on Madam de Palmis, when she was avoided by nearly all the other females of her acquaintance, and after a marked coolness had subsisted between us, as might be expected, she was extremely surpized at my visit. I found the Chevalier d'Hermilly with her, and after the first compliments had passed, I told

the Marchioness I had taken one of the principal boxes at the Theatre, for the new play, and that I came to offer her a place in it, for the first night of representation. To declare this openly and in presence of a witness, that I was determined to appear in public with her, was, in fact, tantamount of an offer of my protection ; she thanked me very cordially, but did not accept it. The Chevalier left us soon after, when I once more renewed my proposal ; on this she took my hand, and pressing it between her own, said, I shall never forget this generous offer ; yet you must excuse me for not accepting it ; any thing may be received from friendship, but I cannot bear to be indebted to compassion ; the most noble actions of which, in the situation we are relatively placed, must ever be considered in the light of painful sacrifices. This reply affected me so much, that I immediately entered into farther explanation. I did not mention what Tiburtius told you, because I had heard it in confidence ; but

I complained that she never informed me of the ridiculous figure I made on our first playing together in the proverbs. She assured me that, at the beginning, she had been desirous to give me some instructions, which I had declined. You see Julien, that, notwithstanding the manner in which I received your sentiments, on this subject, I concluded by doing justice to them. Every spontaneous movement of the heart is good; while those of self-love are alone bad; in fact, I wish to correct myself of vanity, for nothing else could have inspired the harshness and injustice of my last letter.. But to return to Madam de Palmis; she betrayed, in the course of this interview, a mind profoundly irritated against society, but accompanied with such noble sentiments, that I became excessively interested in her welfare; I could not, however, prevail on her going to the Theatre.

"The next day, she came and brought me the piece written by Mr.***, proposing that I should take a part, on con-

dition that she might be permitted to give me a few previous lessons, in the first of these, my principal defects, caused by the false notion that, to produce effect in such amusements, every thing should be forced, were corrected. My part had been written so as to render it at once more brilliant and easy than her own: although many blanks were left, she suggested an infinity of ideas, which greatly contributed to its success. All the witty expressions, so highly applauded, were of her introduction, whereas it was easy to perceive, she relied on personal charms alone, for her own success, carefully abstaining from exercising her talents, she actually despoiled her genius for my embellishment; had it been possible to lend me her grace and beauty, she would have, no doubt, decorated me with them, on this occasion, so extremely solicitous did she seem that I should shine conspicuously.

"Be assured, however, that it was not for the sake of those borrowed plumes I agreed to her desire, or took so much

pains to succeed, it was solely for the purpose of proving my respect for your opinion, that I altered my mode of playing, and thus placed myself once more *at school.* I have sought your approbation, and attended to your praises: because those of others frequently deceived me, while you alone are sincere. As to the play, having gone through it *with credit,* this time, I shall make a point of acting no more. Another object of this letter is to inform you, that I am determined not to abandon Madam de Palmis; I shall, on the contrary, defend her in every company, as much as I can, and declare myself her friend on all occasions. Her virtuous sister-in-law treats her in the same manner; but the Duchess goes to Court, or frequents large assemblies so rarely, that she cannot be of much use to her; besides, all her friendly offices will be solely attributed to the family connexion that unites them, it is, consequently, in my power to be infinitely more serviceable.

"Adieu, do not desist from improving

me by your advice and corrections ; this letter requires no answer, as you are only permitted to address me for the above purpose ; when I attain your idea of *perfection* tell me so, with an exhortation to persevere."

I read this long letter, which so well depicted Edelie's candour and greatness of mind, a dozen times over ; nor could I help thinking it expressed something more than mere friendship ! . . . . How often did I not reproach myself in having been for a moment capable of misunderstanding the nobleness of her character, founded as it was, on the basis of true generosity ! . . . . With what promptitude did I not now change my late sentiments, and how soon was not Zenayda banished from my thoughts ! I had not shewn Edelie's last note to the Viscount, and also took good care not to communicate the contents of this to him. As he continued silent on the subject of his own secret, I thought myself fully justified in following his example ; it is true, I had

promised to shew him all I should write to his sister; but this promise did not engage me to betray her communications. Eusebius, convinced of my honor and probity, suffered no uneasiness, particularly as he did not suspect I was really in love; relying also on the pride of noble birth, he reposed with the utmost confidence in Edelie's sentiments and elevation of character.

We did not go to the country this year, as the Viscountess was pregnant, and suffered great indisposition from her situation. The Viscount was constantly attending her, nor would the most violent love have added a particle to his tenderness and affection. Although I saw him every morning, our interviews generally passed in reading or talking on matters of business; the only time I ventured to change our usual topic, for three weeks, was to tell him of my pretentions with regard to Zenayda.

CHAP. V.

An unexpected Visit. — Reading of a Poem.

In the midst of all my good fortune, I experienced a mortification, which occasioned considerable annoyance; I usually went about twice a year to pay my respects to my uncle, the butcher, Claude Ledru; his son, Jacquot, used also to call on me from time to time, but I always took the precaution of appointing an hour for these visits, when he would be sure to find me alone; I had no ambition whatever to introduce Jacquot as my cousin; for, to say the truth, he was vulgarity personified. My cousin, then twenty-five, was excessively fat, and about five feet ten high; to the figure of Hercules, he united all the awkward clumsiness, rude habits and uncouth address of a country boor at fourteen. His face would have been tolerably handsome, were it not

disfigured by a constant convulsive grin: but rustic health and stupid good humour, were amply displayed in his corpulent figure and fine complexion. His riotous mirth in the family, and among *his companions*, was so well received, that nothing could restrain its excesses: extremely vain of his father's wealth, and on the best possible terms with his own dear countenance, which he believed incomparably fine, Jacquot never suffered a moment's timidity or bashfulness, and was, besides, invariably supplied with a large stock of the most consummate assurance. Occupied in his trade during the week, he was only at leisure on Sundays, when he used to come to me early in the morning; I generally gave him tickets for the Theatre, which preserved me in his good graces, although he would sometimes call me a *Jessamy*, adding that it would have been much better for me, had I chosen some good lucrative business, instead of being a Viscount's secretary; he, however, se-

cretly envied my education and manners, which may be supposed, by his boasting of having a cousin, who was, as he expressed himself, *a pot companion*, to the principal grandees of Paris; as I endeavoured to harmonize my manners with those of Jacquot, whether in our private conferences, or while at his father's, he never attempted to insult or ridicule me seriously.

My friend, the poet Florbel, had lately written a poem in three cantos, which he was desirous of reading to the Viscount. whom he did not as yet know. It was, in consequence, arranged that I should ask the Viscount, Tiburtius and Florbel to breakfast, in my own apartment, after which the poem could be read. I took good care not to appoint Sunday, on account of my cousin Jacquot's visit: it was, therefore, fixed for a Monday. To confess the truth, I was highly flattered in thus showing Florbel how intimate I was with the Viscount d'Inglar and the son of the Duke de Palmis; I could, at

the same time, display my judgment in poetry to these estimable friends, while the decisions of an author, who had already acquired some reputation, gave weight to my criticism. Though the breakfast hour was ten o'clock, I got up much earlier than usual, to arrange my chamber and give my servant the necessary orders, so as to have every thing served in good style. Tiburtius was the first who arrived; he had scarcely come in, when I heard a noise in the antichamber, and supposed it was Florbel; but on the door being half opened, who should I see but Jacquot; on perceiving me, he burst forth into a horse-laugh, for this was his usual mode of beginning a conversation; his red and rejoicing visage petrified me. Although Tiburtius had a great regard for me, he was eminently satirical and sarcastic, I therefore naturally dreaded the effects which the unexpected appearance of this strange personage must produce; I was convinced that it would degrade me in his

opinion, and I should lose somewhat of that flattering equality which he had hitherto permitted to exist between us. Jaquot marched in with his usual assurance, shuffling and swaggering. The appearance of Tiburtius did not give him the smallest embarrassment; Jaquot, who took him for a mere youth, did not, in fact, think him worthy of notice: Well! cried he, there you are, my boy, *all in a maze*, at seeing me *in my Sunday clothes* on a working day! but you must know cousin Delmour, that *I am going to leap the garter*....—What is that Jacquot? I asked.—Why to *make myself a Benedick*, *to be sure*..the business was settled last evening: I marry the daughter of neighbour Troussel, the pork-man... Oh! oh! and pray when is the wedding to be?....—As the old song says: *we shall be married on Sunday*, you must come, there will be *a famous blow out*, and my aunt does the sweetmeats....There has been a *kick-up* already at Troussel's among all the relations, where we had

the devil to pay. Your step-father was *one of us*....and a more complete quiz I never met with in all my travels. Tiburtius interrupted this agreeable recital, by enquiring if his intended bride was pretty....Oh! as for that, he replied, she *has a prodigious pretty purse.* At this Tiburtius and himself burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; as for me, I thought of nothing but how to rid myself, without delay, of this insufferable intruder; before Florbel, whom I dreaded much more than the Viscount, should arrive. Jacquot wiping his eyes, (for he had laughed till tears came,) and resuming his harangue: *I shall not make much fuss about it*, said he, my sweetheart is a *bouncing lump of flesh* and tolerably tempting; when the knot is tied I promise you there is no fear of our getting the blue devils. Here the convulsions of laughter recommenced, those of Tiburtius surprized me greatly, but they enchanted my cousin, who declared him to be *a prime youth and jolly dog*..

In fact he thought Tiburtius was not more than sixteen or seventeen....I was on thorns when the door next opened, and to complete my agony, the Viscount and Florbel came in together, having met on the staircase. I whispered to my cousin, and told him that, as I wanted to speak to those gentlemen on particular business, I should call on him in the course of the day. Unfortunately it rained hard, and he asked me to send and call a coach for him, which he termed a *jarvy*, because he had to make *a long trot*, as he said, and did not wish, with his coat of best *north country superfine cloth*, to get spattered to his *haunches*. This reply made me as pale as death, I foresaw all the consequences of his visit; in short, although I had intreated my servant to use every degree of zeal and activity, in the execution of the commission, he did not return for less than a quarter of an hour, and during the whole of this time, my cousin fairly out-heroded himself in the most stupid

and impertinent attempts at being witty; Tiburtius laughed continually, Florbel listened with astonishment, and the Viscount suffered for us both. I tried to put the best face I could on the matter, and really had occasion for all my fortitude to dissemble my impatience and embarrassment. The hackney-coach having at length arrived, I was delivered from this dreadful annoyance. When Jacquot had gone, Tiburtius said, it must be confessed that this young man is quite an original in his way. You have seen nothing, observed the Viscount, there are many of that kind to be met with in Paris; Julien has often related a number of scenes, infinitely more comic, than the one we have just witnessed. What ingenuity and kindness was there not in those expressions of the Viscount! I had never spoken to him of my cousin Ledru, but in a tone of great reserve; yet he had contrived this, in order to make it appear, that I was neither embarrassed, nor ashamed of our relation-

ship. Those few words relieved me from the ridicule which is always attached to this species of confusion.... Now, gentlemen, he continued, when people say, and as so many romances and tragedies have repeated, that noble sentiments proceed from *patrician* blood alone, we can answer by comparing Julien Delmour to his cousin. This comparison, which served to re-establish me in the opinion of my two guests, filled me with gratitude, and although Eusebius had conferred many more important favours on me, none had ever affected me so much. How amiable is wit, when thus employed!... and what a false calculation to prefer it, as the vehicle of malice, which only produces hatred; to that ingenious benevolence which almost exacts adoration!

My breakfast, thanks to the Viscount, now went off very well; Florbel was an encyclopediast, and of course a partisan of the modern philosophers: his manners were very pleasing, and he possessed wit and talents; but he had been from

his youth acquainted with that formidable being, who gave to the philosophical sect, numbers, venom, intrigues and faction. When it is recollected that a man of Mr. de Pompignan's superior merit was ruined by this junto, it was necessary to have the most steady principles, and intrepid courage, to avoid being intimidated, especially when the object was to aspire to the place of a member of the French Academy, and this honor was so passionately desired. Florbel had not the strength of mind, which elevates some men even above self-love; besides, evangelical doctrine did not quite so much suit a young man of a lively imagination, as the philosophical ones, which do not clash with any of the passions, and but too often deify them. He, therefore, attached himself to the party which could obtain for him what it had procured for others; but he took his amiable disposition along with him, and was neither vindictive, or a detractor of the talents of those who opposed his opinions. He used to say, he admired

the literature of his country so much, that it was impossible for him to consider any author as an enemy, who, in whatever manner, added to its lustre; a sentiment that displayed no less justice than patriotism.

His poem was on *toleration:* this work, written *philosophically*, was devoid of argument, for he had nothing more for its foundation than the ambiguity, which confounds the toleration due to *persons*, with that which morality can never concede to bad principles; but excepting this objection, the poem was written in a very brilliant style. Florbel read it, and what is very unusual amongst poets, he appeared satisfied with our applauses, he chose the following motto from Voltaire:

"Try to reach the port, but seek not other's harm."

I know the line very well, said Eusebius, and have always thought there was not the least point or justice in the allusion.... How? asked Florbel. But, replied Eusebius, of what consequence is

it? The truly pious man, should think of his own salvation, instead of consigning his neighbour to perdition; does it follow, that I should have highwaymen hanged, because I find their crimes deserving death, or that I ought to flog and brand those who are sent to the pillory, because swindlers and sharpers merit those punishments. To this observation Florbel answered with a joke, the others laughed, and thus ended the discussion. It might also have been added, that the christian, far from conspiring *another's harm*, only exclaims against errors of faith, in the hope of contributing to reform impiety, and saving people from the perils to which he observes them exposed, for according to his idea, repentance can redeem the most profligate of mankind, even in the last stage of existence. But Eusebius had made a rule never to carry an argument too far, in conversation; a necessary precaution, without which there would no longer be any sociability, and this was the reason of his giving up the subject so soon, on the present occasion.

CHAP. VI.

A Singular incident.—Masquerade at an Ambassador's.—A lapse without Love.—Repentance.

EDELIE had commanded me not to answer her letter. I obeyed, although it cost me a severe pang; for, I saw by the progress I had made in her affection, that it was exclusively due to the scrupulous fidelity with which I adhered to our original compact. The idea of seducing such a woman inspired me with horror; while the glory of directing her by my advice, of preserving her from the dangers by which she was surrounded, and the hope of being always considered her most confidential friend, were quite sufficient to make me happy; nor was the singular nature of our connexion the least powerful stimulus to my attachment; I felt myself worthy of acting the pure and noble character in which she had placed

me; these considerations enchanted me with futurity, in which I contemplated Edelie, elevated by my counsels, above the rest of her sex; while an exalted friendship recompensed me for the sacrifices of love; thus it was, that, passionately attached and even loving without hope, I deemed myself happy, and enjoyed the most delightful reveries.

Notwithstanding all this, I determined not to fail in keeping the appointment with Zenayda, though resolved not to go beyond mere politeness in the proposed interview. The day having arrived, I was on the point of going to fulfil my engagement, when a message from Edelie retained me; I was suprised at her sending me a note direct by one of her servants, who came, as he said, with directions to deliver the letter into my own hand. I requested he would wait for the answer; and on his retiring, I opened the note with great agitation, which was still more increased by reading what follows:

"A person who has just come from Zenayda, informs me, that she has seen a cameo drawing in her possession representing the *emblem of Hope*, accompanied by the *anchor*, *bird's nest* and *rose-bud;* in short, Zenayda says that she received it from a Gentleman (whom she did not like to name), but that he had *invented the design expressly for her;* and that moreover, theywere to be *married* in a month! is it not rather strange that I should thus hear of your marriage merely by accident! nor is it less singular for you to have presented, as *entirely your own invention*, a design of which I had made the original sketch; and not only without my consent (which I should certainly not have refused), but, totally unknown to me!....

"No friendship, however warm, justifies such conduct. This is, therefore, the last letter you will ever receive from me, and you are not to write again on any account.

"Casilda shall lose nothing by this

change in my sentiments: she deserves to be loved, for her own sake, and I hope to teach her how to place a just value on sincere friendship."

It would be impossible for me to describe the astonishment, grief, and anger which this note occasioned; I fell, as it were, from the clouds into an unfathomable abyss, I was not certain of being able entirely to clear myself from the accusation; however, I instantly wrote the following answer: "Although circumstances as strong, as they were extraordinary, may have exposed you to the effects of falsehood and duplicity, your character is sufficiently known to me, to have immediately exculpated you in my opinion; as to the emblem, it has never left my possession for a moment: I neither lent, nor shewed it, except on the day you saw it at the Castle of***. I return it to you, not for the purpose of proving my innocence, because you might easily suspect that I have given a copy of it!.... but I willingly part with this object, as I

could never contemplate it without the most painful emotion !.... *My marriage* has never yet been in agitation ; not a single word (even indirectly), has been said on this subject between Zenayda and myself; yet, when you see her hand given to another, you will then merely think she has not kept her word, but broken her faith to me !...... Farewell, Madam, you have deprived me of all the happiness I had so fondly treasured in my heart, by destroying hopes that were inspired by the purest sentiments ; those of eternally preserving your confidence and esteem. These hopes no longer exist ; destroy then the symbol of them ; burn the picture, for it can only remind you of an act of cruelty and injustice ! I thank you for your kindness to Casilda, and doubt not that, under your care, she will become the possessor of many shining qualities : but can you really teach her correctly to value the attachment of a feeling and virtuous heart ?——

"I am going instantly to require an ex-

planation of this mysterious affair, for it is for me to know that there is some treachery in thé whole transaction."

After having written this note, I placed it in the small case with the emblem, gave it, properly sealed up, to the servant, who then departed, I then, without losing a moment, went to Zenayda. She was alone, and kindly reproached me for the lateness of my visit ; I told her that I had just learnt she was going to be married, and that I had a right to complain of her not having done me the favor to inform me of it, particularly during our interviews of last week. As this reproach alluded to the coquettry she had practised towards me, she blushed ; observing that she intended to confide it to me that very day. Your confidence, said I, is always flattering, even though it be *rather late*......May I presume, Madam, to inquire the name of him who has the happiness to be the object of your choice ?—It is not for love that I marry again, said she,..I cede to the vio-

lent passion I inspire and not to my own inclinations ; a little vanity, perhaps, has contributed also to determine me: I am going to marry a Courtier......Some family affairs have hitherto hindered me from divulging this projected union ; but, from you, I shall conceal nothing....—And pray who may this happy mortal be, Madam ?—The Marquis de Solmire..—

As may be readily conceived, this name excited my astonishment to the utmost; while I was, at the same time, excessively pleased, because it explained every thing, and my justification would naturally follow. It was evident that Solmire, having witnessed the success of my cameo at the Castle of ***, had determined to have a similar one made from a description of it, to present to Zenayda, when apparently he had as yet only *hopes*. Delighted with this discovery, I curtailed my visit as much as politeness would permit, and hastened home, from whence I directly wrote to Edelie, minutely stating all the particulars of my discovery : sure of thus fully

exculpating myself, I felt so happy, that none of my previous ill-humour remained; the letter was therefore couched in the most sprightly terms, without containing a single reproach. I had just sealed it when another messenger from Edelie brought me a second note to the following effect:

"How cruel your letter is! it has drawn tears from me, still it should not afflict me, as it furnishes a proof of your innocence. My joy, on this occasion, is not to be described; I alone am culpable, and I thank heaven for it! But you will be generous. Let me have one word more!....You may then resume all the *concerted* austerity, which I need so much!...... As to the device, it shall never leave me, and will create sensations of happiness in recalling to my mind, an act of injustice which now only serves to strengthen the friendly ties!......"

I could not restrain my tears on reading the above, and felt how much rea-

son Edelie had to prescribe that I should write *only one word more!*......For, if I had undertaken to compose a letter, I would have employed the most passionate language of love......So much had we both already wandered from the style of our original compact!...... Profiting by this moment of enthusiasm, I obtained a confession of the most tender affection......But had I not done so already? Was not this note enough? The name of the sentiment it explained...... That name was, however, every thing to me, and nothing could serve as a compensation, for hearing it pronounced, or reading it....Such were my thoughts on this trying occasion......Disturbed in mind, uncertain and agitated, I walked about my room considering what I was so anxious to write, when I suddenly heard a bell, which I knew to be that of Eusebius, I had no apprehension that he would have come at this moment; for I knew he was occupied with people on business; but the bell brought

him to my recollection, and myself back to reason......It was not, therefore, in vain that I called honor and integrity to my aid, I now determined not to write more than I was ordered. Taking a sheet of paper, I traced with a trembling hand this single word : *guess!* and then enclosed it under a cover with the first, the date of which explained that it was written before I had received the second message ; thus prepared, they were immediately delivered to Edelie's messenger.

I could not bear the idea of leaving my room during the rest of the day, which was passed in a state of the greatest absence of mind ; and, having returned home early in the evening, instead of going to bed, I passed the night on thinking of Edelie and reading her notes. This, together with my anxiety, had such an effect on me the next day, that I appeared to be greatly indisposed ; it, however, occurred to me that the only way to calm this torment of the mind and distraction of imagination, was to occupy myself more than ever in useful

studies. I had already entertained an idea of preparing, on vellum, and for the use of Edelie, a collection of moral and religious precepts, in prose and verse, extracted from the pious works of our best authors, and to ornament the manuscript with illuminations of various designs. I had even began this work ; I therefore now renewed the task and continued it with great spirit ; I had sedulously sought the names of such saints as were most harmonious, and discovered, not indeed in apocryphal legends, but in the martyrology, acknowledged by the church, that almost all the names of the celebrated pagans, not excepting those of the mythological deities, had been sanctified by religion ; that is, borne by saints and martyrs ; upon which account I prefixed *Saint* to the names of Iphigenia, Orestes, Calliope, Polyhmnia, Cleopatra, Themistocles, Cato, Socrates, Plato, and Virgil ; nor did I forget to place St. Edelie at the head of this collection, accompanied by her miniature, which I copied from a

portrait lent to me by the Marchioness d'Inglar, who was in the secret of my undertaking. I also ornamented this collection with the portraits of those who were most dear to Edelie. I placed the profile of her mother, under the name of *Saint Sophia** one of her christian names, reserving that of *Casilda* for the miniature of my sister. I drew the Marquis d'Inglar under the name of *Saint Nestor*, Eusebius under that of St. Telemachus† (and although so grating to my feelings),

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* A Martyr whose daughters were also canonised. The greek name of Sophia signifies wisdom. This Saint gave to her daughters three names which, in that language, mean Faith, Hope and Charity. *Vide Martyrology.*

† This Saint had the glory of abolishing the combats of Gladiators. In one of those exhibitions, he suddenly threw himself into the arena, separated the combatants, and raised his voice against those barbarous entertainments; but the furious populace massacred him. This heroic self-devotion, was not without its utility, as the Emperor availed himself of the occasion, to abolish the sanguinary practice altogether.

Count Joseph under his own; I also drew his portrait, for which he sat to me. Finally, I ornamented this work with the profile of a living Saint, the Duchess de Palmis; to whom I left the name of *Octavia*, which she had received at her baptism. Having solicited a few sittings, she condescended to grant them on seeing my book and learning its destination. The first time I waited on her, it was impossible not to feel a species of emotion, on finding myself in the house of a woman so universally revered for her wisdom and virtues! I was even agitated beforehand in considering how I could draw her likeness; and greatly embarrassed at the idea of being obliged to look at her so stedfastly. Every thing in this mansion had a particular air, which was not to be found in any other, it seemed to be the temple of peace and good order; the servants were more civil than elsewhere, tranquillity was depicted on every countenance; you never heard the slamming of doors, or scolding of servants, every

thing went on without confusion, yet with that alacrity, calmness and moderation which are the never failing results of a well regulated domestic establishment. The Duke, who was present at the first sitting, requested me not to draw the Duchess in the cameo style, but as a miniature, by painting the profile in colours, as I had done that of Edelie; not wishing to adhere too closely to the plan I had proposed, I took care to invert the portrait a little, by which I was enabled to display the extraordinary length of her black eye-lashes; it would appear as if nature had taken particular pains to veil those lovely orbs, of which the expression was so pure and modest.

When the profile was finished, I shewed it to Eusebius, asking what he would advise me to write under such a countenance. In the evening he gave me a slip of paper, containing the following passage from the scriptures: "A shame-"faced and faithful woman is a double "grace..... As the sun, when it ariseth

" in the high heaven; so is the beauty of " a good wife in the ordering of her " house."* I copied these fine expressions in my book, of which the just application was infinitely more complimentary than all that love and gallantry had ever devised, through the most brilliant and flattering inventions of fancy.

The perfect resemblance of those portraits, the ingenuity of the other designs, of which the figures were imaginary, the variety of the allegories, the garlands, vases, and richly gilt ornaments, the clearness and beauty of my writing, in short, the sublimity of the passages quoted from the Scripture, the Fathers of the Church, Pascal, and our greatest christian orators, such as Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Massillon, Fléchier, the Hymns of J. B. Rousseau, &c. together with many interesting accounts of different Saints, rendered this book really valuable. I caused

Ecclesiastes, Chap. XVI.

it to be magnificently bound, and on the eve of new year's day sent it to Casilda, desiring her to present it, *in her own name*, to her benefactress. This offering, which bespoke a work that required considerable time and industry, was received with delight. Edelie showed it to all her visitors; for more than a week there was no other topic of discourse, in the first circles, than this book, which she so extolled, that it was generally regarded as a perfect masterpiece.

Towards the middle of January, the Spanish Ambassador gave a magnificent masquerade. These entertainments, when given at court or by Ambassadors, were a kind of flattering attention paid by our Sovereigns and rich noblemen to the less dignified orders of society; such as farmer's general, merchants, and opulent tradesmen, who could not appear in the *full dress balls* at Versailles, or the houses of Ambassadors. Edelie had determined to induce the Marchioness de Palmis to accompany not only herself

but the Countesses Melcour and Volnis, to this brilliant festival; both the last-named ladies, were justly celebrated for the utmost purity and regularity of conduct, maintaining the highest respectability in society. Edelie arranged a quadrille, and prevailed on those two ladies, though not without difficulty, to dance in it with the Marchioness; but, four days before the ball took place, Madam de Melcour, who was to have Eusebius for a partner, announced, under pretence of indisposition, that she could neither dance in the proposed set or even go to the ball. She had, in fact, treated Madam de Palmis so very coolly, when they met to practise the quadrille, that it was readily supposed her motive for absenting herself, arose from her not wishing to appear in public with the former. Edelie, quiet in despair, now looked out for another to occupy her place, when a lady, who had never been known to frequent either balls or theatres, and whose husband was reputed the most jealous of

mankind, came to offer herself instead of Madam de Melcour, adding that it was at her husband's desire; and who should this be, but the Duchess de Palmis! It was, however, evident that she only acted thus, in order to relieve her sister-in-law from a most unpleasant dilemma, and though it was well known she never did any thing without the entire approbation of her husband: the astonishment of every one was at its acme on this occasion. To instruct her in the figure, it was necessary to make several rehearsals in great haste, when the surprise was still more increased on seeing her dance with a perfection that excited universal admiration. Edelie certainly informed us, that she had been instructed at the nunnery, by a regular dancing-master, whose most accomplished pupil she was; but who could have supposed that so young and lovely a woman, would have renounced without regret, an amusement which is, above all others, calculated to heighten the charms of youthful beauty? Eusebius was of

course her partner, and, on his return from the first rehearsal, I was waiting for him in his cabinet, for it was the hour at which I usually joined in his studies. On entering, I was struck with the air of dejection which appeared in his countenance. He immediately threw himself into a chair, saying, how dreadfully fatigued I feel! *Fatigued*, said I, and of what? This quadrille is too much for me! . . . .—Finding that I made no reply, after a moment's silence, he looked at me, with a softened and almost suppliant air, exclaiming: Why do you not speak? I now plainly perceived what he needed; in spite of all his resolutions, it was evident that, if he did not wish to open his heart entirely, he wanted me to talk of her who occupied his thoughts. Afraid, however, of adding to his embarrassment, I restrained myself, and merely said in rather an indifferent tone, that this quadrille would certainly excite a great deal of curiosity, because there was much anxiety to see the Duchess de Palmis

dance......Ah! my good friend, he replied, you will then see the very perfection of dancing!......It is impossible to describe the incomprehensible charm of her mildness and modesty!......Her tranquil manners and placid countenance bears no resemblance to frigid indifference; it possesses something celestial! Her look, always serene, has nothing of severity in it; nor has she even supposed that harshness should find a place in her character, while the purity of her mind is sufficient to enforce respect! the decorum of other women, who are compared to her, appears mingled with affectation, and their vivacity, mere coquettry; even the Marchioness de Palmis, with her fine figure, noble manners, and expressive eyes, is really insignificant compared to the Duchess. It would be truly barbarous, not only to attempt her seduction, but even to intrude on her notice, or disturb that harmony which exists between her sentiments, duty, inclinations, and virtue......On saying this, Eusebius rose from

his seat, and walked several times round the apartment in great agitation; then, turning towards me, let us say no more about it, said he; this is an exposure which must never occur again; and, my dear Julien, remember, for your own sake, that it is highly improper to communicate those ideas which the mind should not harbour. At these words he sat down at his desk, and recommenced his studies with more assiduity than ever. It was impossible not to admire such a character as the Viscount; although, far from having acquired such command of my own passions, the examples he held out, were certainly not lost on me; on the contrary, they have always inspired me with the desire to imitate him; frequently reanimating my courage to persevere in virtue, while they also reminded me of the errors I have committed.

Edelie sent me several tickets for the ball, where I went with Durand, his wife and my new friend, Florbel. I was in a black domino, and masked. As

may be easily imagined, the arrival of the quadrille party did not fail greatly to interest me, knowing that Eusebius, Edelie and Tiburtius were to dance in it. According to custom, the couples walked round the ball-room at first, two and two, accompanied by the music. They had chosen the ancient french costume of the age of HENRY IV. Their dresses were splendid and covered with jewels; but, Eusebius was particularly remarked for his elegant figure and fine person. He conducted the charming Duchess de Palmis with a grave and solemn air; Count Joseph led the Marchioness; Tiburtius Madam de Volnis, while Edelie gave her hand to the Chevalier d'Hermilly. The Chevalier, without being handsome, had an agreeable countenance, and a great fund of humorous vivacity: he was also young and very fashionable: I had already met him at Zenayda's, where he appeared extremely amiable, whereas, I now examined him with all the rancourous ill-n ture of jealousy; but he was the

partner of Edelie, who spoke and smiled to him! I reflected, with great irritation, that, if I had the good luck to be born in a *privileged order*, I too, should have figured in this quadrille; in fact, I perceived my old hatred against nobility was revived on the occasion. The dance went off admirably, and was applauded with enthusiasm. Of the gentlemen, Eusebius and Chevalier d'Hermilly were the most distinguished: Madam de Volnis was compared to a Nymph of Diana; Madam de Palmis to Terpsichore; Edelie to a Shepherdess of Astrea, and the Duchess de Palmis to an ideal Divinity; it was said that she gave the idea of that grace which presides more particularly over modesty and delicacy. After the quadrille, she went to join her husband, who was seated at another part of the room; when they immediately left the ball together and went home. Eusebius remained sometimes seated next to Edelie, or Madam de Volnis, and at others, taking a melancholy turn through the

apartments. In one of his tranquil moments, he called me by my name, which made me known to Edelie, who interrupted her conversation with the Chevalier, in order to say a few words to me. I answered her very shortly, and then chatted a few minutes with Eusebius; when I suddenly went to a distant part of the room unable to bear the sight of him who had the privilege of sitting by and conversing with her. Not many paces from where I sat, there were two females, one attracted my attention, by her elegant shape, and the little I could see of her face, for they wore only the half mask, which enabled me to admire a very pretty chin and fine set of teeth in one of them. I spoke to her without disguising my voice; upon which she immediately left her companion, who was only in the character of a waiting-maid, and took my arm, when I soon recognized the Baroness de Blimont! In the temper in which I then was, this proof of confidence, from so fine a woman, flattered me exces-

sively, particularly as she bore a title. To say the truth, I thought more of her charms and genealogy, than of her morality! much less rigid than in the former interview we had together, I even joyfully agreed to make the tour of the saloon with her, and such was the beauty of her shape, that she excited great admiration. The Spanish Ambassador, who was very well acquainted with her, and who often visited at her house, joined us; as he was not masked, I wished to leave the Baroness, but she retained me, and taking the Ambassador's arm without quitting mine, I was not a little proud to find myself *matched* with an envoy in escorting a charming woman, I therefore walked boldly past Edelie, who was still seated on the same bench, with the Chevalier. I had purposely slackened our pace that she might have full time to see me. In passing, I made a slight bow, and then turned hastily towards the Baroness, with whom I affected to be exceedingly intimate. The Baroness now expressed a

wish to dance with me; although I was by no means well versed in this accomplishment, for I had never received more than three months' instructions, but with a good ear, tolerable figure and youth on his side, a man can always manage to get through the difficulties of a ball-room. I had frequently been complimented on my dancing, but, from having no pretentions on this point, I always danced negligently; I supposed, however, that, with attention and great efforts to succeed, I might be able to equal the Chevalier d'Hermilly. While arranging the set, I had a dispute with a person who wore a black domino and mask, which represented a hideous grinning visage. This man had taken a place which he contested with me; but the point was, at length, settled by his giving way. I did not pretend to the grand operatic style, and only wished to give my dancing the character of careless animation and sprightly levity, so that, what with jumping, twisting and turning with uncommon velo-

city, I astonished the Baroness; she danced extremely well, and a circle was formed round us to admire her. My ridiculous capers also attracted a number of persons; many exclaming *it is d'Auberval!** as I could not observe the expression of their countenances, the whole being masked, I thought they really did take me for *d'Auberval.* At this moment, I distinguished Edelie in the crowd of spectators, holding the Chevalier by the arm; this sight so redoubled my emulation and pride, that, giving way to my impetuosity, I confounded the whole figure, when the quadrille concluded in the greatest confusion; fortunately every one thought, and even Edelie and the Baroness supposed, I only intended to exhibit a caricature from the beginning. As for myself, I had no doubt of having surpassed d'Auberval in difficult steps, agility and grace, as well as in humour. After the quadrille, the Baroness and I sat down together on the same bench.

* A celebrated Opera Dancer.

Here she was attacked by all the masks who came near us, when I could not help admiring the inexhaustible wit and extreme good humour, with which she replied to all their importunities. After disposing of her suitors, she turned to me with an expression of the most seducing gentleness and sensibility. I now felt all that dangerous influence which a masquerade has on the imagination; the music, dancing, mysterious disguise, language of love and gallantry ; the intrigues with which I was surrounded, that general abandonment of all propriety : the universal equality, and studiously concealment, that vivacity without rule or restraint, and above all, the blandishments of a charming woman : in short, my anger against Edelie, added to this display and combination of circumstances, quite turned my brain.

At four in the morning, the Baroness wished to retire; for which purpose she pretended to look for her *female friend*, when I proposed to see her home, which

after a feeble opposition, she accepted. We left the room and went down stairs, I then called her servants, the carriage drew up, and she entered it; I had already my foot on the step, when I found that some one behind, pulled me violently by the domino; I turned round and by the light of the lamps, recognized the grinning mask with whom I had the dispute already mentioned. His conduct did not now correspond with the expression of his mask; he desired me in a whisper to follow him; I, of course, supposed it was to demand satisfaction, and did not hesitate to obey; taking my foot from the step, I told the servant to keep the door open, and tell the Baroness of what he saw. I then, without waiting for any reply, precipitately departed with my antagonist, who had taken hold of my arm; he conducted me into a large gallery of the Ambassador's house, and approaching a bench, he sat down in silence, while I remained standing before him. After some moments, I enquired

what he wanted ? Have patience, he replied with a loud and hoarse voice.... Let us come to the point, said I, for I am not at all disposed to patience. What do you want, and who are you ? At these words he raised his mask, and my surprise may be conceived on recognizing Durand !..None, but the most ferocious are ever vexed, at avoiding a duel.— Expostulating with him on his strange conduct. It is the act of a friend, he replied, I followed you continually with my eyes, saw the *Syren* take possession of you, and observed when you left the ball-room together. I was not the person with whom you had the dispute ; he is a clerk at the Admiralty ; and, under the pretence of having a little intrigue on hand, I changed masks with him ; as we are about the same size, I was sure that you would be mistaken, I therefore followed you hastily, and you know the rest. If I had attempted to stop you without disguising myself, you would have turned it into a mere joke, and I should then have

made a very ridiculous figure. Thus you ought to forgive me for a stratagem which has saved you from the artful seductions of a dangerous woman. For my part, I think I have rendered you an important service....My dear Durand, I replied, permit me to be ungrateful for this once, perhaps reflection may beget gratitude in me; but, I confess, that, at this moment, I cannot feel any. Never mind that, said Durand laughing, I am not in a hurry, I can wait for it. Come and look for my wife, whom I left in the ball-room with a friend, we shall conduct you home. Durand then took me by the arm, which he held tightly, as if he was afraid I should attempt to escape from him, but I had no intention of the kind. I recollected with what strength of mind, and by his advice, I had, two years before, resisted the advances of the Baroness; this reflection excited shame in me; and that sentiment was the commencement of repentance.

CHAP. VII.

A grand Dinner, at which Julien is present: Impressions; Sentiments.—Lying-in of the Viscountess d'Inglar.

The Duke de Palmis, who had caused such astonishment by taking his Duchess to the ball, increased the public amazement, by inviting all the ladies and gentlemen who danced in the quadrille, to dine with him two days after, and to please Eusebius he invited me; but, all the family went to this dinner, not excepting the worthy Abbé, and Mademoiselle de Versec: in addition to the rest, two or three of the most amiable noblemen of the court were also asked, making seventeen altogether, and I never saw a company better selected, or more brilliant.

Eusebius, since our return from his country seat, had left the house of his parents, and resided in one of his own.

I dined at the Marchioness d'Inglar's about once in six weeks, at most; and, as I had never met Edelie there, it was not without emotion that I found myself engaged at the same party on this occasion.

The Viscount had sufficiently formed my manners to prevent my appearing embarrassed, though I could not lay claim to any very great pretentions on the score of fashion ; but from being on terms of such intimacy with the Viscount, only visiting his mother occasionally, and in her family circle; not having been at grand parties more than ten or a dozen times since I had given up my shop, I had much more theory than practice ; I was, in fact, deficient in that ease of polished society and those graceful manners, which early habits can alone give ; I had not the self confidence that naturally results from such fortunate circumstances, or an illustrious birth, which often places a man where he receives honors that are not always merited. I felt

myself eclipsed, and a nonentity in the presence of so many noblemen, who were accustomed to assemble daily with the desire of pleasing mutually; practised in this art, they excelled in it; I could have very well supported my part in a general conversation, or in a moral or literary discussion, but I knew nothing of those desultory conferences, of which the levity, the ingenious turn, the refinement, delicacy and graces form the chief value; I was disheartened by the superiority which I found in all the company, and felt awkward in comparison with the rest. Ill at ease, I could only obtain an occasional word, or a smile from Edelie; this excepted, she was so completely occupied with the Duchess and others, that she seemed to have quite forgotten I was in the room. The Viscount, who sat at another part of the table, paid me no attention whatever, which appeared a cruel desertion in my opinion. Count Joseph scarcely appeared to know me. I therefore con-

sidered myself very fortunate in being able to converse with the Abbé Desforges, who, from taste as well as inclination, retired to a corner of the saloon, where he received me with his usual kindness, and thus kept me in countenance.

Eusebius never once approached the Duchess, but expressed a desire to see the Duke's child, and the Duchess rose to go for it, saying, that, not expecting to have introduced her boy into such distinguished company, it was necessary she should order the arrangement of his dress; on going out, the whole company began to speak in her praise, enumerating her unaffected modesty and the amiability of her domestic habits; all agreed that gentleness, docility and benevolence, formed the perfection of her character, she did not displease any one; the esteem, which she inspired, had somewhat of affection in it, and to complete the panegyric, all the ladies did her justice! when her dancing wa spraised, some one observed, rather maliciously, that he

thought it very strange she did not go oftener to balls! She does not wish it, replied the Duke; but, added he, smiling, she has made a little carnival of her own, for she has dedicated all the holidays to the hospitals and prisons, and to those who have not seen her there, it is impossible to imagine how beautiful she is. Whilst the Duke was speaking, I had my eyes fixed on Eusebius; his countenace explained all that he felt, I was greatly affected by it. At this moment I came to his recollection, he looked about for me, our eyes met, we comprehended each other. An instant afterwards he approached us, and taking the next seat, entered into conversation, which afforded me great pleasure.

The Duchess now returned leading in the most charming little boy, then three years old, I had ever seen. The Duke had given him the name of Octavius, from Octavia, that of his mother. Every one caressed the child, for he possessed all the fascination of his age; and was

neither sulky nor forward. Eusebius took him in his arms, pressed him with rapture to his bosom....contemplating the child with the most lively emotion, for he was a striking likeness of his mother. It is easy to see, said the Duke to him, by the way you caress our little one, that you are about to become a parent yourself, and, continued he laughing, if it should be a girl, may I engage her for my Octavius. This proposal, which was a mere joke, Eusebius answered very gravely by accepting ; the Duke, highly flattered with the answer, rose and approaching the Viscount, took him by the hand saying, This shall hold good, if our children do not oppose it. The Marchioness d'Inglar then said, I will also be Godmother to the expected infant, and if a girl, I shall take care to give her the name of *Octavia*, which, on every account, ought to be a lucky one to her. The Marchioness did not know how grateful this idea was to Eusebius,

though she could not have said any thing more agreable to him.

We now sat down to dinner, I was placed at a corner next to Mademoiselle de Versec, who had never appeared so tiresome and rusticated. In other respects, I contrived to act in such a way, during the remainder of the day, as to avoid the sarcasms or censure of my more dignified companions. I was calm, polite, and reserved: after dinner, Eusebius remained only a short time in the drawing-room, and then retired taking me with him. Arriving at home, we heard that he might momentarily hear agreeable news of the Viscountess, whose accouchement was hourly expected. I remained all night in the study, where he often came to express his anxiety, which was really very great. The Marchioness, Marquis d'Inglar and Mademoiselle de Versec arrived, at six in the morning, and the Viscount came to me about eight, exclaiming with the utmost delight: All my wishes are

accomplished ; she his happily delivered of a girl !.. An event on which I did not fail most sincerely to congratulate him. From that moment, in speaking of the child, he would always call her *my Octavia! my dear Octavia!* Such was the gratification he found in repeating that secretly adored name !

CHAP. VIII.

Melancholy events.—Eusebius and Julien leave France.

A FEW days after the lying-in of the Viscountess, my uncle, who had a dropsy on the chest, fell into a state of lethargy, which but too fully indicated his approaching dissolution ; I flew to his house and found Matilda attending him with the most affectionate care. For two months, during which his disorder began to assume a serious appearance, Matilda had been unremitting in her exertions for his comfort, and those last duties,

which even women of the worst disposition perform well, caused this excellent man to forget injuries which a husband should never pardon. I was desirous to go and remain with him from the beginning of his complaint, but Matilda said, that, as he was not aware of his danger, (which, in truth, he was not acquainted with,) I should alarm him by leaving all my other concerns merely to remain at his house. I, therefore, dared not insist, though I went regularly to see him three or four times a week ; till I saw him so very ill, that nothing could any longer hinder me from staying with him altogether. I remained four days and nights at his bedside, along with Matilda, who never quitted him ; on the fifth day, he expired in our ams, with the utmost resignation and piety..My faithful friend, Durand, whom I always found ready whenever I had need of him, continued with me the whole of that sorrowful morning : he informed me that the Viscountess d'Inglar was so dangerously ill from the

consequences of the accouchement, that her life was despaired of; having confided my claims to the inheritance of my uncle to Durand, I ran to Eusebius and found him in the deepest affliction; the Viscountess was at the point of death, and expired that very evening! Eusebius regretted her sincerely as a virtuous wife, and the mother of his child; I did not leave him, except to pay the last offices to the remains of my uncle, and then devoted myself entirely to the affairs of my benefactor. During two months he received no one but his own family: at the expiration of that time, an unexpected occurrence suddenly changed both his situation and mine. An uncle of the Marchioness de Palmis, and with whom she was the greatest favorite, was appointed Minister for foreign affairs; the Marchioness, from gratitude and friendship to Edelie, solicited strongly and obtained a diplomatic mission to the north of Europe for Eusebius, much superior to that for which he had vainly solicited during eight months, and which

had been refused under the pretence of his extreme youth. It was therefore decided that the Viscount, as Minister Plenipotentiary, accompanied by the Abbé and myself, as secretaries, should depart in about six weeks for Sweden. The Viscount confided the little Octavia to the care of the Marchioness d'Inglar. Durand undertook to conclude the affairs of my inheritance; I only requested of him not to enter into any law-suit against his widow. Some days before our departure, I went to take leave of Edelie and my sister; I called at an hour when I was certain of finding the former alone; about to banish myself for several years, I was desirous to have a private interview with her: the conversation was serious on both sides, and quite austere on my part, at the commencement. It is as difficult in a long conference to preserve a cold and harsh manner with those we love, as to display a constant kindness towards one whom we dislike. I reproached Edelie with levity, and so easily

yielding herself up, without reflection, to first impressions. Yes, said she, I remember having sent you two letters, one of which I ought never to have written..—If your heart had dictated them, said I, do not regret it; for I cannot help feeling that my conduct warranted them; but, it is of your judgment I find fault; I complain of that vivacity which too often gives you an air of coquettry..—How; and with whom?..—With the Chevalier d'Hermilly.—Does it become you to reproach me with vivacity, when your own went to such preposterous extremes, at the masquerade and with such a female!....—I only wanted to stifle my feelings; at all events, any pretended dissipation ended with the ball, nor have I since seen the woman to whom you allude....—Then you did not see her home?—I give you my word I did not.——But, you do not tell me that it was owing to those who forced you from her carriage. At these words, I was rather disconcerted, but perceiving that

she was not well informed of my adventure, I had consequently the means of denying it, and immediately recovering myself! observed, it really afflicts me to see that you are always so ready to believe any thing against me, no matter how absurd..—No, Julien, interrupted Edelie, I have not believed a word of this story; and if you have patience to hear me, you will perceive that it was impossible I could have given credit to such a one. It was Madam de Blimont, herself, who recounted the affair to Count Joseph, from whom I heard it. The Count still occasionally visits this woman, whom he terms the *modern Aspasia*, and whose society amuses him; he there collects an infinity of scandalous anecdotes, invented by bad company, which thus attempts to be revenged on the good from which it is excluded. Those tales are in general totally unfounded, and as for this one, I can well imagine that it is a fabrication of *Aspasia's* own. She asserts that, by dint of entreaties, you extorted permis-

sion to conduct her home , but that a mask, whom she did not know (though no doubt one of her admirers,) who had followed, watched and listened to her during the whole evening, had certainly overheard your conversation, and taken his measures accordingly; that, when you would have entered her carriage, a grand mask escorted by two others (apparently the emissaries of the jealous man,) attacked you, put a gag in your mouth, and carried you off. She subsequently heard that they had taken you to a very solitary place behind the Ambassador's house, where they tied you to a bench, and left you exposed to the most piercing cold, for above three hours ; and that two sweeps passing that way by mere accident, had set you free at eight o'clock in the morning ! This story, said Edelie, was widely circulated, and reached me from every side, but with sundry variations and embellishments ; for instance, many assured me that your kidnappers had put a label on your breast, with these words in large

letters, *The man of gallantry refreshes himself by repose!* Others pretended that the ticket bore a more learned inscription, the motto generally placed under Hercules on cameos.

He rests after labour!

In short this story would have made you appear truly ridiculous, had it not been completely falsified by the more credible testimony of the Chevalier d'Hermilly......—How, the Chevalier ?.... Yes, I left him in the ball-room, where he met you at four o'clock and saw you, half an hour afterwads, go into a coach with your friend Durand and his wife. As to my pretended coquettry with the Chevalier d'Hermilly, I declare to you that a desire of pleasing and wish to show that good humour, which is usually taken to masquerades, as being necessary for their enjoyment, and not less indispensable than a domino or mask, was the only motive for my conduct; besides, the Chevalier neither writes to, or visits me, nor shall he ; for I find

him too young and fashionable for a new acquaintance. These causes of exclusion are so seductive, that they may cease to alarm. I must also conclude from all you say, that balls are dangerous to females, as they must take an *indispensible* desire of pleasing to them? For my own part, I confess, that all mothers and husbands ought to wish that their daughters and wives should never frequent such places.———But you are a proof that a ball has also its dangers, even for men, as, after having attracted notice, your whole attention was directed to a courtezan. Let us change the subject, she continued, you and I can never have any other difference than such as arise from mistakes. Be always rigid in your observations on my actions, but be just in your opinion of my sentiments. It is true you can no longer give me daily advice, but this idea will only make me the more circumspect. When you did not find fault with me, I was tranquil!.. Here I shall be quite alone, burdened

with the care of my reputation, which becomes doubly dear to me, from the value you attach to it.... You will write to me often, and long letters; will you not? Nor will they contain any thing but what relates to my duties, Eusebius, and Casilda.. I also require that our correspondance be carried on through my brother; it will be to him I shall send all my letters, open for you.. I listened to Edelie with so much agitation, that I found it impossible to make any reply.

Women have an habitual delicacy that, without any artifice, give them a peculiar facility of expressing just what they wish to say and no more, this is a qualification which we can never attain. We generally excel them in whatever requires strength; but though we may conceal our sentiments, we do not know how to disguise them in such appropriate language, my answer was therefore very short: Edelie saw the perturbed state of my mind and sympathised with me. After a moment's silence, sighing deeply, she

said: Ah! Julien, what a farewell is this! how melancholy!....What a distance.. How many foreign countries will now be interposed between us!....Deprived of the two friends of my youth, I shall lose both emulation and a desire to please; what signifies the praises which they cannot hear!....But, I shall have some indemnification in the care of Casilda's education and of your fortune. Julien, for heaven's sake endeavour to rise, and let your industry and talents, make up for the blindness of fate!.... My friendship requires this noble ambition! ...—Ah! without that friendship, said I, my destiny would have been already decided! my utmost wish has hitherto been to have never quitted the protector of my infancy, and the friend of my youth; but you entertain an ambition for me, of which I am not myself possessed, believe me it is sufficient to know it, to inspire me with ardour and perseverance in surmounting every obstacle. Birth is the result of chance, but greatness of soul and intrepidity must influ-

ence our career. The Prince, born in a palace, may sink into obscurity, whilst the peasant, who once guided a plough, shall ascend to the highest dignities. No ! he who interests you cannot fail of success ; I feel in the purity of my attachment to you, the forebodings of glory and good fortune !—I am satisfied, said she, in broken accents.... Oh ! Julien...... do you recollect the tender note, which contained but one word ?....in this last farewell, I can also tell you, to *Guess!* ......at these words, I knelt in silence before her ; it was in sign of obedience and to serve as a reply....She gave me her hand, which I pressed between mine and bathed it with my tears, when suddenly rising and retiring a few steps, she said, let us reassume all our fortitude.. She then went to the fire-place, and rang the bell : while I retired to a window to hide my tears ; a servant having entered, she sent for Casilda....Thus ended an interview, of which the recollection can never be effaced from my heart or memory.

CHAP. IX.

Departure of Eusebius and Julien.—Their arrival and establishment at Stockholm. Julien returns to France with important Dispatches.—Changes in society during an absence of ten months.

On returning to the Viscount, I found him greatly agitated, having some days before paid a visit to the Duchess and the Duke de Palmis, whom he had not seen since the dinner, he promised to take little Octavia to see them, before his departure; it was just after this visit that I came in, he had but a few moments before seen his daughter, caressed by the Duchess and her son; Octavia had just left the arms of her namesake, who was constantly repeating that she had never seen so lovely a babe! it was scarcely possible for two individuals to

meet on more equal terms than Eusebius and myself. Like me, he concealed an unhappy passion; like me he was also a prey to profound melancholy. We remained, shut up together, the remainder of the day, and only spoke of business. I devoted the following days to my mother, Durand and Tiburtius, who came one morning, in a great passion, to inform me that Zenayda was to marry Solmire on that very day. In this, said he, she acts infamously, for I am certain she loved you, and only marries this stupid ass Solmire, that she may obtain the honour of being presented at Court. How many matches are made on this principle! continued he, how many blockheads and knaves obtain the preference over worthy men who truly merit a return of love, merely because they give their wives the mighty privilege, on certain days, of wearing a hoop of three yards, and a train of six! . . . . How many young women sacrifice love and happiness to the intoxicating glory of

being allowed to go to Versailles every Sunday, in the most inconvenient dress, to catch colds, weary and fatigue themselves to death, in running up and down the staircases, strutting through long galleries and vast suits of apartments, all for the sake of being present at the dinners of the princes, or at the Queen's card party! .... When one thinks of all this, it is really enough to make one a philosopher! This sally of Tiburtius had my entire approbation, for it fully accorded with my private opinions and sentiments.

In order to avoid the painful ceremony of *taking leave*, we set out at midnight; the Viscount, Abbé and myself, rode in the same carriage; while the Viscount's valet-de-chambre and the Abbé's servant, who was too old to perform this long journey on horseback, followed us in a post-chaise. We were escorted by four out-riders, three for the Viscount, and one for me; and travelled in very great style, to which, though a trifling circum-

stance, and notwithstanding all my grief, I was by no means insensible. The Abbé, who had made a nest in the front seat, soon fell asleep, while the Viscount and myself nourished our afflictions in silence; at times he pressed my hand, and our reiterated sighs, found an accompaniment in the regular and incessant snoring of the Abbé.

The break of day, by producing a variety of new objects to my view, relieved me from a part of my sadness, but it was not so with the Viscount, who had been travelling from his infancy, whilst I had merely ran over Switzerland, without *éclat*, or any other occupation than that of sketching its fine landscapes; but now, the intimate friend of the Viscount d'Inglar, I was no longer lowered in my own opinion; besides, I enjoyed innumerable little trifles which habit had rendered indifferent to him. Those who are born in an elevated sphere, have a great moral advantage over the inferior classes, in being exempted from placing a value on

many of the puerile vanities of life; the son of a nobleman, who attains an eminent employment, cannot have a number of trifling enjoyments, which a tradesman's son, brought up in such different domestic habits, naturally possesses. This does not proceed from *birth and noble blood*, but from education. I have a thousand times, in my infancy, admired the customers who came to our shop if they had *fine equipages and handsome liveries*. When, from the other end of our warehouse, I heard the sound of a carriage, I ran to the door to see it pass; it was therefore very natural that, at the age of twenty-one, never having had any vehicles but miserable hackney coaches at my command, I should not be superior to a weakness of which Eusebius could have no conception. I am, however, willing to allow, that, in the rank which providence had placed my birth, there may exist minds sufficiently strong, to escape such imbecility; and I am inclined to believe that Durand was never susceptible of it,

but, I only speak generally and of my own impressions, which I have undertaken faithfully to describe.

I was, therefore, by no means indifferent to the effect which our equipage produced in passing through the small towns, or even the villages; however, (and this is saying a great deal) my vanity created neither pride nor insolence; I was affable and kind to the people, particularly all those who came out of their houses to gaze on us; or, who surrounded our carriage at the post houses, whilst we changed horses; I smiled on one, saluted another; asked the ages of little children, and gave alms liberally to the poor, especially old people; in fact, I became popular on the road, because my vanity was concealed under the mask of charity, which often serves to efface the ridicule that would otherwise attach to this weakness; I triumphed, at the inns, and was secretly delighted at the tumult and *alarm* we occasioned: it was in these, I acted the most brilliant part, because the Viscount allowed me to settle

every thing wherever we stopped to dine; I therefore took care to order the best viands and choicest wines: by assuming a dignified air, I became an object of wonderful respect to the inn-keepers. I had also the pleasure of seeing the men and maid servants dispute the honour of executing my commands: so that, although I complained of the fatigues of the voyage, I really found very great pleasure in it.

My taste for Inns was a little abated on entering that part of Germany through which we passed. The Viscount wished to dine at the "*table d'hôte ;*" on entering the dining room, the excessive heat of the stove, and a cloud of tobacco smoke, rendered the dinner any thing but agreeable: the sand strewed on the floor *for cleanliness*, appeared to be a good intention badly put in practice. Our travelling appetite was quickly palled by soups made of flour and beer, the mixtures of meat and sweetmeats, not to mention a great scarcity of bread. At night, on

retiring to rest, I was put into one of the most puffed up beds, I had ever seen; having got my leg on the edge of the bedstead, and while striving to make myself a place, I fell on the floor and almost broke my knee pan; asking for a blanket, they threw another feather bed over me, and closed my curtains hermetically, in order, as they said, to preserve me from the severity of the climate: thus stifled, I found myself delivered without sword or buckler to myriads of vermin, which attacked me during the whole night, *sans* intermission.

Like the Gamester of Regnard, who renews his passion for his mistress, when he loses; travellers, in their moments of discontent, recollect the happiness enjoyed in their own country: during my unwilling wakings in those nights of persecution, I utttered the most piteous exclamations, such as, Charming Edelie!....Oh Paris!....Oh rue de Varenne!..would that I were in my polish bed! &c.....

We, however, became more reconciled from necessity, and even soon began to turn those annoyances into jokes; but Stockholm recompensed us for all our sufferings. The Swedes are hospitable, polite and obliging: this brave nation naturally sympathises with the French. We were well accommodated, and as the city is full of objects of great interest, it pleased us highly: my self-love was fully gratified; the Viscount's friendship was amply proved in the liberal maintenance he allowed me; and the mode in which he treated me from the beginning, convinced me that I should possess every advantage a young man can desire in society.

By adding three years to my age, and making me twenty four, Eusebius had recourse to a little artifice that was very useful to me, as will be seen hereafter. The Abbé and myself made part of the diplomatic mission, in the capacity of first and second Secretaries, each of our appointments being paid by government; thus I held a situation which I

might consider as the commencement of my fortune. Lastly, my accomplishments made a distinguished personage of me in a country where they were very scarce; while they enabled me to render the residence of the Viscount the most agreeable in Stockholm, and caused my company to be sought for, by people of the first distinction.

I received letters from Edelie about every two months, all of which were exclusively devoted to morality and religion; I answered her in the same style, and the Viscount, who read our letters, told me, laughing, that in the course of time, our correspondence would form a very good collection of sermons; but that, for the honor of those written by his sister, he would take care not to inform her, I was infinitely less grave and austere with the pretty women in Stockholm. I often wrote to Durand and Tiburtius; the letters of the latter amused us excessively; though full of really good matter, they were as witty as his conversation.--

Speaking of the Baron de Palmis, the Viscount used to say that he had entered society at seventeen with an originality of genius, and decision of character, which, when united to a fine person, generally operate as an excuse for many little acts of wildness, that naturally tend to retard the maturity of reason, and though Tiburtius would doubtless be long the spoiled child of good company, his talents could never be of an ordinary cast.

My time seemed to pass more agreeably in the Swedish capital than while at Paris. Edelie had inspired me with ambition; and I had commenced a grand career, through which I hoped to go with honor, this induced me to enter society with a wish to please in it; and such was my ardour to study literature and the fine arts, that there was every reason to expect success, while not a moment remained unoccupied.

I had been eight months at Stockholm, when the Viscount acquainted me that

he was desirous I should return to Paris, to take some important despatches, and arrange several affairs of great consequence to him there. I accepted this commission with extreme pleasure, and departed without delay. Although I had enjoyed the amusements which so many new objects in foreign countries offer to a stranger, still my heart beat with joy in recrossing the frontiers, and especially in discovering the steeples of Notre Dame. Alas! cried I, on approaching the scene of my nativity, how sincerely do I pity those whom an unhappy fate has banished from their country! Whatever may have been their faults, a forced exile of very few months, is quite sufficient to expiate them......

What a change I found in Paris after ten months absence?......Edelie and the Duchess de Palmis were always the same; but the Marchioness de Palmis separated from her husband, and residing with her uncle the Minister, was only sustained in society by the influence of

that uncle, whose favour at Court seemed to be fully established. The Marchioness was still less esteemed than ever, and with good reason, but she was no longer railed at. No situation can prevent a person from being criticised in society; the severity of opinion is inexorable there, but those only are proscribed from whom nothing can be expected. Tiburtius having had the temerity to visit Madame de Solmire rather too often, could not obtain his pardon from the Marchioness, who had taken the Chevalier d'Hermilly as his successor. I had a curious conference with Tiburtius on this subject, which is worthy of recital. When I scolded him on his inconstancy, he replied, that I was an ungrateful fellow, for he had only wished to please Zenayda, that he might revenge me for the preference Solmire had obtained over me! I asked him if he regretted the Marchioness? Not at all, said he, the lover of a woman, who has her immense interest, can only appear to the world as a suitor of the worst

kind; if I should ever become ambitious, I shall certainly employ none but the noblest means of obtaining advancement. —That is an admirable determination, my dear Tiburtius, and I sincerely wish your principles were as good as your sentiments. My principles? cried he, they are excellent!——What! and while you thus deliberately intrigue with married women?——Deliberately! who told you so?——Have you any scruples?—— Be assured, my dear Delmour, that those who like me, have a daily opportunity of contemplating the greatest model of human perfection in existence, must revere virtue, and none but a depraved heart can be insensible to the obligations of religion.——You allude to your step-mother the Duchess de Palmis?. . . . Yes, my friend, to that incomparable woman who, when examined with attention, excites a species of dislike for all those that do not resemble her. Yet there is one, and one only of my acquaintance who has some similarity to her; it is the

Countess Joseph. I should be deeply enamoured of her, if she were not the intimate friend of my step-mother, who would never forgive any attempt to seduce a lady whom she endeavours to render as perfect as herself. I should also inform you, the Duchess endeavours to bring about my own conversion, with a degree of patience that is inexhaustible; she suggests various moral studies, gives me good books, which I make a point of reading.——Well and what then?——I read bad ones also, which do not however convince, though they lead me on: but all this will have an end; besides, when the boy grows up, do you not recollect that I am to be a preceptor?—Of whom?——Octavius; have I not promised my step-mother to be his tutor and guide?——This is one way of preparing for the task, it must be confessed! ......Yes! but it may be better than you suspect! I have reflected on my conduct and sentiments, and I now feel that nothing can be more unfortunate

than for a young man to begin life by encouraging a violent and illicit passion. ——But, my dear Tiburtius, have you never had *a violent one* for Madam de Palmis?——Yes, I loved her passionately, and from the age of fifteen; she then merited admiration, and my affection arose from that sentiment, I long thought my secret was unknown; I found, however, that it was not so to her, for on attaining the age of seventeen, it was easy to perceive, she saw through my attachment without being offended at it. But my enthusiasm soon abated, and in losing its original stimulus, my passion gained in impetuosity; this led to a knowledge of all the schemes and artifices, which experience gives to those men who have reduced the art of seducing women to a science. After my duel, I obtained the positive assurance of her sentiments; it is true, I only received the vows of a *pure and platonic* attachment, but this ought to satisfy an adept in love matters. Thus then, in spite of the horror with

which my tutor, and the instructions of my step-mother had inspired me against the crime of adultery, notwithstanding the natural inclination I had for all that is virtuous, noble and generous, behold me, at twenty, a duellist, and the seducer of a woman, four years older than myself, one, who till then enjoyed an irreproachable character; behold me the gallant of my uncle's wife, engaged in a labyrinth of treachery, falsehood and ingratitude to my own family......A courtesan, a Baroness de Blimont, whom I should have always despised, could never have entrapped or led me into such a fatal error!......Yes; I now perceive that a passion, when no longer combined with esteem, is much more dangerous then a mere caprice....And yet, I have escaped from its greatest danger. If my casual intrigue with Zenayda had only grieved Madam de Palmis, it would have tended to increase a first attachment, which I never intended to break off; I would have thought myself bound to devote my life to her, and to sacrifice every proposal

of matrimony that might be made to me; I never should have thought of marriage, my whole existence would have been implicated for ever in a most criminal connexion; I should have ended by believing, like so many others, that constancy in depravity justifies and even adds *respectability* to the most culpable conduct. Fortunately for me, Madam de Palmis, blinded by jealousy and all that anger which arises from wounded pride, hastened to console herself with the Chevalier d'Hermilly; by which, in attempting to revenge herself and punish me, I have been effectually cured: she has, in fact restored the future to me, and as I alone am responsible for it, I shall endeavour to make it profitable. I was so delighted with these observations of Tiburtius, that I embraced him most cordially; but he was on his guard, and afraid of commiting himself, resumed a tone of bantering and pleasantry, for he also had imbibed the whim, common in those days, of dreading to be accused of pedantry or affectation; hence the supposition that, in

conversation, reason and feeling always required a *corrective* in ridicule and levity. There were then two sects in society quite distinct from each other; the one prudish, romantic and sentimental, supporting inconsistent morals and groundless principles, emphatically proclaiming the most exaggerated sentiments, which were in some respects also the most dangerous: the second sect from antipathy to exaggeration and bombast, spoke lightly of the most serious things and ridiculed every one; not from perverseness but a mere spirit of contradiction. In this sect no *abjuration* of virtuous sentiments and principles was required; it even indicated bad taste to have denied *their* efficacy; but it was agreed never to dwell on a rational topic; or to use a feeling and moral expression without adding a jeer or sarcasm to it: in short, to turn *all sentimental* themes into ridicule. Tiburtius was *enlisted*, from his first entering society, into the most natural, gay, and consequently, the most amiable party, who had always the

laugh on their side, and if he had not entertained so much veneration and attachment for his step-mother, he would have long continued to display a degree of levity that must have formed a strange contrast with his naturally profound and scrutinising genius. Few persons of that day had a sufficient share of good sense to remain neuter in the midst of those two parties. Eusebius really did possess that strength of mind, and was besides the most perfectly virtuous man I had ever known.

I saw my friend Durand again, with a double pleasure, for his fortune had experienced a brilliant increase: his father-in-law was dead, leaving my friend an income of 60,000 francs per annum; he had, besides, a place under government worth forty thousand more, which together with his savings and the sums he had gained in several advantageous speculations, amounted to one hundred and thirty thousand francs a year. I was astonished to see him, with such a fortune living in only part of a house which be-

longed to him, and of which, he certainly occupied the best floor, but he had let the remainder. I was not less surprised at the simplicity of his establishment; every thing denoted easy circumstances, yet nothing indicated luxury; when I testified my wonder at this, he replied, my good friend, I wish to go on still for seven or eight years; this plain and modest exterior will become me better than magnificence; it demonstrates a regularity and decorum which gain that credit so necessary in our station; even people who accuse me of avarice, will not be the less disposed to give me a preference over the bankers and men of business, who make a parade of luxury and elegance.——The upstarts, too, who are favoured by fortune, can only escape by their modesty from the sarscasms of envy, and the slanders of hatred and calumny. Superb furniture, fine horses and a sumptuous table, only serves to attract parasites and intriguers; or to draw down the lash of satire and ridicule on our heads, we reserve our esteem for

objects of real value: my wife has no diamonds, but she possesses good sense, graceful manners and pursues a virtuous line of conduct; my drawing room is not magnificent, but it is never occupied except by select company; men distinguished for their virtue or talents, and women of unblemished reputation. I have no box at the theatre, that I may be enabled to subscribe to the charitable establishments, and put my name to all the collections for benevolent purposes, or the advancement of the arts. In short, a prudent man who is wealthy, ought to regulate his expenses by the income he derives from positive sources, and not from that property which, being employed, is liable to be lost; especially as, in order to oblige his friends, and avail himself of good speculations, he should always have a certain portion of ready money. Thus it is, my dear Delmour, that my house-expences are so arranged, as not to exceed from thirty five to forty thousand francs per annum; and where there is but one child, will not the

above sum enable any couple to enjoy all the comforts of life? whatever goes beyond them, is mere vanity. Durand concluded, by requesting me with the cordiality of sincere friendship, to consider his house as my home, inviting me, once for all, to dine and sup there every day. The Marchioness d'Inglar had given me the same invitation, and I went much more often to her; for it afforded me an opportunity of seeing Edelie, I thought I had a right to seek the latter's society as we were on the point of separating again, and for several years. I learnt a great deal of private history, at the Marchionesses; the Marquis de Palmis, no longer able to appear in the field of gallantry, but anxious to try every career, had become a devotee: for, from ignorance and indolence combined, he had that kind of devotion which does more injury to morality than impiety itself (though it be devoid of hypocrisy), because, it only serves to calumniate religion, to which it constantly attributes those things which religion

most reproves; such as slander, intolerance, hatred, revenge, pride, and ambition. The Marquis de Palmis believed, that a man is devout, when he no longer keeps mistresses; and that he observes all the exterior forms of religious duty: declaims against philosophers, from Socrates down to our own times, without doing the least justice to any of their merits, or appreciating the happy influence they have had in certain circumstances. With this want of equity and justness of thought, no one can ever possess true piety; he may suffer the privations he imposes on himself, and be weary of frequenting the church: hence springs that peevishness which is brought home from it; that illnature to those who lead a different kind of life. Moliere and la Bruyere, have unmasked hypocrisy; but ignorant and mistaken zeal with all its sincerity, is, if not as hateful, at least more ridiculous. It is scarcely possible to believe in the absurdity of this weakness, when we see people impressed with an idea, that to rectify it, they have

merely to read the gospel! I also heard that the Baroness de Blimont, then thirty-six, although she acknowledged only *twenty-eight*, had lately become the victim of a dangerous disease and two or three doctors, arising from a ruined constitution, caused by dissipation, she had besides lost her beauty, and as a last resource turned authoress. Her first production was a novel of course. Having been tempted to look into this literary curiosity, I found some with in it, and (as in all those of the *philosophical school*), a moral that permitted every thing: *heroines* who acted according to this convenient and sentimental doctrine; but who, in lofty language, descanted with emphasis on the duties they betrayed, and on virtues equally destitute of soundness and utility. There is, in all the works of this nature, an inconsistency, bombast and irregularity that must ever render them despicable to persons of judgment, who naturally expect rectitude in principles, as well as purity of language.

CHAP. X.

An Unexpected Meeting.—Extraordinary Scenes.

I HAD been at Paris three months, having satisfactorily concluded nearly all the business on which I was employed, finding myself thus disengaged from a number of anxieties, I now thought of nothing more than how I could most agreeably pass the eight or ten days, that were to intervene, before my final departure from the capital. Florbel proposed to take me to hear a very curious reading, that of a comedy, written by a great man, the Prince de S*****. How, cried I, is it possible for a titled man, one of the principal Court Lords by birth, in imitation of Messieurs de Montesquiou and Chatellux, to range himself also in the rank of dramatic authors? Yes, said Florbel, and what is more, *this*

attempt will certainly not succeed; the Prince de S*****, is far from having the talents of those you have mentioned. He is inflated, to the highest degree, with a rage for literature and the fine arts; but, unluckily, this noble Mecænas possesses very little judgment: for, while he attaches wonderful importance to words, the Prince is equally deficient in learning, taste and genius. He has, for some time, been accustomed to draw a number of literary men, and distinguished artists round him; to these he gives a dinner twice a week, and occasionally grants them his patronage. From his dinner being good, and the protection useful, it is very natural that, from gratitude no less than emulation of each other, we should chaunt the eulogium of him who so liberally makes up for our own want of success, with an *undiscerning* public. This laudable feeling accounts for our exhausting panegyric in praise of the Prince's refined taste and great genius. In short, we have given him such a

high idea of his talents, that he has written a comedy in five acts, and will read it to us this very evening.—And, pray, how will you contrive to get out of the scrape?—Very easily, we shall tell him he has completed a masterpiece.—Nothing more?--He would not be satisfied with less.—And if he should have it performed?—It will, of course, be damned, which we shall attribute to a scandalous cabal and foul conspiracy; but out of compassion to our patron, we shall however prevent him from making it public; he must, therefore, be contented with the plaudits of private parties.—How can you manage to introduce me?—With the greatest facility: he is so sure of success, that he has given me permission to take any one I like to the reading! He is at his country seat, ten leagues from Paris, where we must be at six o'clock, we also sup there....—Will his auditory be numerous?—There will be three or four academicians, including myself, and his own circle, composed of Madam de

Morinville, his mistress, (a very pretty woman of great address), six or seven courtiers, who, though agreeable companions, are but very bad judges of literary productions, so that they will implicitly believe all we say ; lastly, there will be two superannuated Countesses who condescend to stay in the country with Madam de Morinville, because they like the house and can play at whist and piquet there, from ten in the morning till twelve at night : we shall be fifteen or sixteen in all.—This Madam de Morinville then, is a kind of courtesan ?-- Not exactly ; she is not supported by the Prince ; it is said she has a large fortune : her demeanour is very decorous and dignified, the old Countesses feign to believe that she is not the mistress of the Prince. We all know, however, that such is the Prince's *predilection* for this lady, that it would not be surprising if he married her, though he is considerably on the wrong side of fifty, and she no more than twenty-three.

All those details inspired me with a great desire to be one of this singular party. I went to Florbel at three o'clock; we departed directly, and arrived at the Prince's plendid mansion about half past six. The whole company had already assembled in the saloon; besides all those whom Florbel had described to me, there were, also, four celebrated artists; a painter, two musicians and an architect. On our entering, Florbel presented me to the Prince and Madam de Morinville; but, what was my surprise, in recognizing in the latter, Matilda, my uncle's widow!.. She was not less astonished, for it was after a journey to the mineral waters, that she had come to reside in this house; and did not therefore know of my return; on the contrary, she believed me to be still in Sweden. Matilda was by no means disconcerted, but, with a smiling countenance, received me very graciously and as an old acquaintance; on my part, I assumed an air of gratitude and respect, taking a chair at the other extremity of the

room, near Florbel. After a momentary silence, the Prince rang the bell, when the servants brought a small table, on which were placed two wax-lights, and a glass of sugar and water;* the Prince sat down gravely at the table, holding his manuscript in one hand; after a short and silly preamble relating to his piece, which was a drama in prose, taken from Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe, the Prince unrolled the book, and began the recitation. Although we all anticipated a mass of insipidity; and to say the truth, nothing could be more defective as a whole, for the style and plot were equally wretched; yet it was not absolutely ridiculous. There were even dialogues from the Novel, that formed many very agreeable scenes: this unexpected surprise placed our minds at ease on the excessive exaggeration of our praises: we applauded without measure, and our astonishment often assumed all the transports

* A very favorite beverage in France.

of enthusiastic admiration. According to our assurances, the rest of the company were persuaded that the piece was excellent; the old Countesses wept with delight; Matilda, whose countenance beamed joy, had tears constantly in her eyes; there was, in fact, nothing wanting to the brilliant triumph of the author. He was deeply affected, and found it necessary to sip the sugared water frequently, by way of refreshing himself. When the reading was concluded, the old Countesses, bathed in tears, threw themselves in the Prince's arms crying, *Ravishing! Divine! Exquisite!* All the company surrounded the author; the Academicians repeated, with an approving dictatorial tone, it is *really most extraordinary! It must succeed!*.......The rest made the room resound with the exclamations of *charming*, *enchanting*, *admirable!*....... In the midst of this chorus of praises, the Prince suddenly exclaimed, *this is too much!* Hear me, Gentlemen.... A pro-

found silence followed this appeal; It is really too much! continued the Prince, I cannot think of usurping so much glory, and shall, therefore, wholly transfer it to the person whose modesty has hitherto deprived her of it; I declare myself to have had no share in the composition of this masterpiece, and that Madam de Morinville is the sole author.... Matilda protested, in the most sentimental tone, against the discovery of *her secret*, while the audience remained stupified. The academicians, who would have been merely polite to Madam de Morinville, most bitterly regretted the eulogies they had so ridiculously lavished: the Prince's friends, who, secretly hated Matilda, because they feared that he would have the folly of marrying her, could not forgive themselves for having expressed so much admiration. However, the mischief was done, and to avoid exposing the grossest flattery, it was absolutely necessary to maintain all that had been said; so that, restraining

themselves, they complimented Matilda on her distinguished talents and entire success! As for myself, who had found considerable amusement in what I had just seen, I experienced no difficulty in continuing my sentiments of approbation; I congratulated Matilda very cordially, and received her best thanks in return. Although I could not possibly admire her drama, I was really astonished at the depth and ingenious combination of her artifices.

The whole company, except Matilda, the two Countesses, M. de Nelmur an old Commandant, Florbel and myself, returned to Paris the same night, highly dissatisfied with their visit. In politely detaining us, the Prince made us promise to remain two or three days with him. I saw that he was quite in raptures at Matilda's success; he spoke of her with adoration! She possesses every talent, said he, in an equal degree of superiority. He shewed us a cameo which he had caused to be set on a magnificent box:

This, the Prince said, he had seen designed, but I soon recognised it as one of my own. It was with the same enthusiasm that he praised her voice, style of singing, and playing on the guitar; the latter idea, was derived from three or four distinguished performers who frequented his house, and who had been gained over by Matilda with presents and flattery; she had also acquired the friendship of the Commandant, the intimate friend of the Prince, by gratifying the taste he had, of being thought the confidant of pretty women, and in ridiculing theanglomania of the French which the Commandant detested from *patriotism*. She had confided an heroic romance, to him, of her own composition, and in which her birth and adventures were related, this he found extremely interesting.

Matilda had obtained a considerable sum of money from the effects of my uncle, who, by his marriage contract, had contrived to settle every thing on her, except the twenty thousand francs he had

given to me. She had just purchased the little estate of Morinville, and immediately assumed the title of it, under which she had visited the waters of Spa, where her connexion with the Prince de S***** was formed. She was not able to conceal from him, that she was the widow of the jeweller Delmour, but asserting a claim of being nobly born, she represented herself as the victim of her family's avarice and severity, for they had forced her to espouse a person so much her inferior, because he had not required a marriage portion. The Prince and Commandant had not the least suspicion of the truth of this story, and felt sincerely for the unhappy fate of such an accomplished young creature, so unworthily sacrificed! Matilda knew my secrecy and the general steadiness of my conduct; from which circumstance she experienced no uneasiness at meeting me again; she even imagined that, by my talents, and what she termed my readiness at writing, I might be very useful to her; and in con-

sequence soon conceived the plan of attaching me to her destiny. The next morning, the Prince having gone to Paris and not intending to return till dinner-time, Matilda conducted me to the end of the park, and there, sitting down with me on a garden seat, said a thousand kind and obliging things; making a short apology for the past: the finale of this discourse, so full of artifice, flattery and falsehoods, was, that she had always loved me. Matilda never made advances, of this kind, without a personal interest; I therefore, easily, perceived she had some design in view; on my affecting to believe her, she melted into tears. After these preliminaries: My dear Julien, said she, I am going freely to open my heart to you. At this expression I, could scarcely refrain form laughter; for, in her, it signified that she would employ every means to seduce and deceive me. I preserved, however, a serious and attentive air. Matilda, looking at me with the most sentimental expression, conti-

nued; My good friend, you have witnessed the triumph I obtained yesterday, I now swear to you I had no expectation of it ....—Oh! as for that, said I, give me leave to contradict you; in the first place the play is delightful, and then you must have also known that it would be praised to the skies, when the Prince declared himself the author; whereas, under your own name, you would have had all their jealousy and envy against you: in fact, your talent, in profound and ingenious calculation, was never more conspicuous than on this occasion; do not therefore deny it, in a private conference.

By admiring Matilda's manœvres, I was always sure of obtaining a confession of them; What an ascendancy you have over me! replied she, smiling, I cannot deceive you!..It is true, I had recourse to that mode of escaping the malice of the Prince's friends, and I acknowledged that the trick was not badly played. In short, my dear Julien, here I am on the eve of

becoming one of the greatest ladies at court, and then I shall have a name, superior to all my competitors for rank, youth, talents and literary reputation. But I do not mean to stop there, I must justify the Prince's passion and my own elevation: the success of yesterday has taught me how to know my talents and strength: every thing must be attempted! I want to write a Tragedy and an Epic Poem....—What excessive ambition!—When we possess it, why should it be limited?—You are able, then, to write in verse?—It is a mere mechanical art, my friend, and can be learned with the same degree of method that you teach people to make shoes or cut out a suit of clothes. Now, my dear Julien, continued she, since fate has reunited us, we should separate no more—How?—I do not like the idea of your returning to that dismal country, Sweden, or that you should thus go in the flower of your youth to be frozen in the north. I profited yesterday by the Prince's enthusiasm on leaving

'the saloon, he conducted me to my apartment, and after an hour's conversation, pledged his word to marry me in a week—Really?—I shall keep you for one of the witnesses; pray remain with me....—But....—Hear me out; you will advise me, assist me in my works, and I shall make your fortune. In the first instance, I offer you a residence, my table, a pension of four thousand francs and a large sum of ready money. You derived twenty thousand francs from your uncle's property, but doubtless you know that Durand, in his mistaken zeal for your interest, would have required more; that he had commenced two law-suits against me, which he lost, and that he has been obliged to pay six thousand francs for your costs of suit; which have reduced your twenty thousand francs to fourteen thousand.—This is the first time of my hearing the circumstance, I replied; for, Durand has never mentioned it, but has paid me the whole sum. It is a noble action on his part, said Ma-

tilda, he has thought himself bound to pay the expences he had so imprudently incurred ; so much the better, I will double that sum, which will make you a capital of forty thousand francs, and you may then remain in your own country ; hereafter, the Prince will easily obtain some honorable and lucrative employment for you. I thanked Matilda, but, without the least hesitation, flatly refused her offer. She intreated in vain, and at length concluded by importunately requesting that I would reflect on it, and not give my final answer for a week. I promised this, fully determined however to persist in my refusal ; I showed Matilda the most polite attentions during the two days I remained at this villa, which convinced her that I was really seduced by her offers, and only made an appearance of disinclination in order to place a higher value on my acceptance. Two days after my arrival at Paris, she sent Florbel to me, empowered to renew her proposal and [illegible] to tell me that, if I

required a greater sum, she would grant it. I persisted to reject it without any regret; for I had not the least inclination to accept her terms, and was peculiarly happy to have Florbel as a witness: for nothing is so pleasing as to have undeniable proofs of our good actions; they are then spoken of, to our friends, with infinitely more confidence and self satisfaction.

I again visited Durand, who would, upon no account, permit me to return him the sum he had paid for the law-suit; he told me that he had engaged in the suit against Matilda, contrary to the wish I had expressed at my departure: that he could not think of my suffering by his errors; and that he ought to have been better acquainted with the infinity of resources she was capable of bringing in her defence. He added, that the judgment in my case was most unjust, and that Matilda's intrigues had surmounted my stronger claim: but the undue influence of women, both in law and politics

is a misfortune, from which I much fear no government can ever expect to be entirely exempted.

I was desirous of paying a visit to the Baroness de Blimont, before my departure; and knowing that she was no longer handsome, I had nothing to fear from this step. I went to her one day, about twelve o'clock, and, on entering, I saw a large bill posted on the door, announcing that the house was to be let; on a closer inspection, I found the number of servants diminished by two-thirds, and the antichamber infested with five or six creditors, who had pushed by the porter, and were now making an intolerable noise: amongst the rest there was a goldsmith, mercer and man-milliner, who stormed with great fury, which soon convinced me, that the *patriotic* protection, which the Baroness had granted with so much philosophy, to arts and manufactures, produced no other return than ingratitude. In passing through the apartments, of which I had once admired

the splendour, I no longer found that elegance which had first dazzled me; there were no more perfumes, no flowers; all appeared tarnished, faded, sad and deserted!......The Baroness received me in her dressing room, now transformed into a study; shelves filled with books, replaced mirrors and voluptuous pictures; instead of the noble vases that once decorated the mantle-piece, you now saw a sphere and a pair of globes; the whole furniture consisted of a desk, and a few hair bottomed chairs. She, who inhabited this dismal retreat, where the ostentation of science succeeded to that of vice, vainly flattered herself to find repose there. The muses are chaste and severe, they may indemnify those who have been the victims of false illusions, but they grant no consolation to a corrupted heart. Peace is only to be found in their sanctuary, as in that of religion, by taking into it innocence or repentance. When they do not purify the mind, they fill it with all the hateful passions, jea-

lousy, envy, implacable resentments; and the devotion, which is supposed to be offered at their shrine, when rejected by them, becomes that of the furies.

The change in the person of the Baroness, appeared to me still more striking than had been described; at an age in which a woman may still be so fascinating, she no longer retained the slightest trace of beauty. The violent medicines which her horrible diseases had required, had for ever destroyed all her charms, eyes dimmed and red, teeth blackened and spoiled, a frightful haggard leanness, and a livid colour, rendered it absolutely impossible to know her, for what she once was. I looked at her with pity: for I saw in her, not the ravages of time, but those of depravity. My appearance greatly disconcerted the Baroness; for she must have seen an expression of the most painful astonishment in my countenance. I soon began to speak to her about the novel, by alluding only to those parts of it that merited approbation.

She told me that all *the devotees, bigots, and hypocrites*, had attacked her book: I had read those criticisms, which were perfectly reasonable, and mildly represented to her, that it was natural for religious people to disapprove of principles completely opposed to those of the scriptures. I shall prove, she passionately exclaimed, that they are all hypocrites, and that their past and even present lives, agree in no respect with the rigour of their writings. It is certain, I replied smiling, that such a reproach can never be made to yourself, as you have always lived according to your doctrine.——I have been compassionate....——True, and who can number those whom you have made *happy*....——I understand you, and am not angry, *I have followed nature's law*; all else is but hypocrisy, or what is nearly as bad, imbecility.—— You do not then permit opinions, different from your own, to be entertained? that is strange; as I have known you to believe in the divining wand and as-

trology; why then should it appear impossible to you, that the scriptures are believed?——I do not want to argue the point now, but of one thing I am certain, it is, that all my enemies are hypocrites, and I shall soon publish a collection of little anecdotes that will leave no doubt on this subject.——Their conduct has no relation to the criticism of your work; the object is to know if their censure is unjust, and not if their lives have been pure; besides, what are your proofs?——Public notoriety.——Take care, Madam, every one knows, that, when in want of proofs and even probability, all calumniators and libellers speak according to *public notoriety*, as if there existed such a tribunal composed of judges, legally instituted and without suspicion, where, in a moment of passion or discontent, one might go directly to collect in regular form the defamatory decrees of the abstract being whom you term *public notoriety*....—You think, then, that the most galling attacks should

be suffered in silence.—Has any one attacked your person?—No, but they have abused my book.—Has it been calumniated in making false quotations? —It has been generally abused, they have had the audacity to say, that it is badly written, without plan, or connexion in the ideas, that no important conclusions are drawn, and that it is destitute of any fixed object; even my system is charged with containing many monstrous errors. —Have you not enough of admirers to console you for this severe decision? You are condemned by a very limited number, whereas your work pleases many, and is in unison with their sentiments. All the philosophers and their partisans, not only approve of it, but are lavish in their praises of you! cannot glory extinguish rancour?—Persons of strong minds are vindictive....—I thought that strength of mind consisted in a generous pardon of injuries; besides, you have not been injured; you confess that your censors have not used the slightest personality.—

From cowardice! as for me, I shall show them that I am possessed of spirit; if they dare attack me again, and if they should publish the least criticism in future, I shall teach them that I know how to revenge myself: for I have powerful friends amongst the learned; and will not fail to pursue my detractors by every means; be assured they shall be crushed....—You will not succeed in it, if they possess fortitude; real talent is only crushed by being discouraged.—Talents, they have none, and we can prove it. She now began a detail of the revenge she meditated; naming her enemies, she spoke of their persons and works with the most sovereign contempt; blasted their reputations, displaying a degree of haughtiness and animosity that inspired me with horror. Yet it was not without design that she thus exposed herself to my observation. By the manner in which I spoke to her, she was convinced I was a friend of those whom she

termed her detractors; she therefore expected I would give them an account of this interview, and that they would be, in consequence, intimidated by her menaces. I left her with feelings bordering on disgust, but I saw such a fund of chagrin, superfluous regrets and misanthropy in her mind, that I could not help thinking she was sufficiently punished by the loss of her beauty, lovers, fortune and reputation: her present condition reminded me of a line in one of the couplets already quoted:

Elmire we should be wise.

On leaving the Baroness I went to seek some repose for my heart and imagination at the Marchioness d'Inglar's, where I was sure of finding Edelie; though I often saw her there, we conversed very little together, but we enjoyed our mutual melancholy, and the happiness of passing a few hours in each others company. Edelie always took Casilda with

her, and I was doubly affected by the caresses of the latter, who was then twelve years old, because having so seldom seen me, this affection must have been taught by another and proved that her benefactress often spoke of me. Casilda had particularly requested that I would give her my miniature before I left Paris; I had it drawn, as a medallion by one of the best artists; the picture was admirably painted, and a perfect likeness; having received it, from the jeweller, the evening before going to dine with the Marchioness, I took it to present to my sister. It was not without considerable agitation that I gave the portrait to Casilda, for, on looking towards Edelie, I saw her face suffused with blushes; fortunately, no one remarked our confusion. The general conversation was highly animated, and related to the assemblage of the *notables*: there was, as usual, on this subject all that curiosity which novelty inspires, but perfect security as to the results. There did not exist a single cour-

tier, at that period, who was not fully convinced the royal prerogative was invulnerable: they all asserted there was not an abuse that required reformation, not even that of the "*Lettres de Cachet*;" thus it was that, equally devoid of prudence and forethought, and fatally indifferent to public opinion, those who were to be the victims of a sanguinary revolution, about to burst forth, slumbered tranquilly on the brink of a frightful abyss!!!

After dinner, Edelie approached me to say that the Marchioness de Palmis requested I would go to her next morning, between twelve and one o'clock, as she wished to deliver an important packet to me for the Viscount d'Inglar. I attended to receive her commands at the appointed hour; I found her drawingroom as full as if it were that of a Minister of State; the Marchioness kept us waiting about a quarter of an hour and then entered with an air of great pre-occupation: she first went and spoke mysteriously to some of the vi-

sitors, paid no attention to me, sat down and discoursed with two females, who seemed to recommend something to her notice; this conference was frequently interrupted by men who advanced to present petitions; others surrounded her chair, and whispered a few words to her from time to time from behind it; she was fully equal to this arduous task, and even contrived to maintain a general conversation at the same time, when those who encircled her permitted it. At length the crowd diminished gradually; she then perceived me, gave me a slight but kind salutation, and a moment afterwards, almost every one being gone, she called me, saying that she wanted to speak to me, and therefore requested I would still wait a little longer. This was a polite way of dismissing those who remained, so that they rose soon after and took their leave, she then conducted me into her study, saying that she was heartily tired of that kind of life, by which all her time

was completely thrown away. To me it appeared that it depended entirely on herself, to be freed from those importunities, as nothing obliged her to suffer them; but this is the common cant of the ambitious; whom to the most vain display of favor and influence, add all the affectation of being exhausted by their labours for the public welfare. The Marchioness opened her bureau, and took out a large sealed packet; delivering it to me, she inquired if I could depart the next day but one. —Yes, Madam, I answered. She then requested me to be seated, saying she would be glad to have a little chat with me: You must travel post, said she, and without any delay. The despatches confided to you are important, and I expect will give the Viscount d'Inglar great pleasure. The minister has been highly pleased with his correspondence, talents, prudence and sagacity: all those, added to a character so unblemished, a reputation so rare, well deserve *a dispensation*

of age; therefore, although only twenty-seven years old, he is appointed Ambassador to Russia, the Abbé Desforges will be his secretary of legation, you are employed *ad interim*, in the post which he vacates in Sweden, with the salary of fifteen thousand francs a year; that this word *ad interim* may not give you any uneasiness, she continued, you may rest assured that no other shall be nominated to the place, and that, in eighteen months, at the farthest, you shall have the title of *Chargé d'Affaires*, if as I doubt not, your conduct and correspondence prove conformable to the opinion now entertained of you. I only wish to tell you in confidence, she added, that, to forward your fortune, I have exaggerated a little as to your age, having asserted that you were twenty-eight....The Viscount d'Inglar, I replied, has had the same idea, in order to give me a little more weight in society at Stockholm; but that which will be more advantageous to me,

Madam, than even a real maturity, will be the favour and protection I owe to you and him. In saying this, I bowed respectfully, ceasing to perceive the ridicule of a female meddling in affairs of government, and, as it were, identifying herself with the ministry. On the contrary, I admired from my soul, the genius, acquirements and benevolence of this political *intriguante*. Deeming her superior to all the statesmen I had ever heard of, when I reflected on the idea of becoming a *Chargé d'Affaires*, through her means, and that I should immediately have an annual allowance of fifteen thousand francs! ......She detained me some time longer to ask an infinity of questions about Eusebius, and expressed much regret at having only known him a short time before his departure, eulogizing him with a kind of enthusiasm. I recounted many points of his admirable character; she heard me with a degree of admiration approaching to tenderness; and, when I ceased speaking, sighed, observing; he

ought not to remain in Russia more than three or four years at most, we shall then recall him, and place him in the ministry: I entreat of you Mr. Delmour, to inform him, that I shall take the most zealous care of his interests here; tell him also, that I intend paying him a short visit, next year, and shall take Edelie with me......How! Madam, I cried, you go to St.Petersburg?......Between ourselves, said she, assuming a most official air, a voyage of curiosity will serve to skreen a secret mission to the North of the highest importance, with which Monsieur de Palmis is entrusted, and it is wished that I should accompany him. —I can readily believe, Madam, that you will not be useless towards insuring the success of the mission. Be assured, replied she, smiling, that I shall not injure it. Here, encouraged as I was by the confidence she placed in me, I hazarded some compliments on her talents, which were extremely well received. I

then extolled *her genius;* and plainly saw, by the manner she listened to me, that she was already well accustomed to such praises; there was no novelty in addressing flattery to the Marchioness; her great influence at court, during the preceding eighteen months, had, in fact, exhausted the ingenuity of panegyric. Having thus terminated a long interview, I departed so well satisfied with my new patroness, that, in my estimation at least, she seemed to possess all the genius of a Richelieu.

CHAP. XI.

Julien's intoxication —Great event.—Julien's departure.—He returns to Sweden.

FROM Madam de Palmis, I hastily ran to Durand, anxious to communicate that I was going to be a *Chargé d'Affaires* at a Court ; however, I endeavoured to assume the composure of a man who is superior to his fortune, and related with tolerable tranquillity what I had just learned. My friend, said Durand, you are now in a good channel, heaven grant that the public affairs interpose no obstacle to your advancement ! no one in the world wishes it more sincerely ; my fortune is made, and yours begins under the most happy auspices ; thus all my wishes are for the stability of the government; but I confess to you, I foresee a political tempest very near.——How ?——

I perceive a great carelessness, and a blind security in the class with which you generally associate , I see in another class, obscure, but much more numerous, an alarming agitation. For forty years past, pernicious writings in every shape, have disseminated so many errors, broken so many ties!......False philosophy has every where circulated the poison of impiety ; it has made the courtiers epicureans, and nearly all the lower orders factious, either in act or intention. One party is lulled to a dangerous repose, while the others operate with a persevering activity ; if a contest occurs, it is not difficult to foresee which will gain the victory.— There are still persons of sense, who possess excellent principles.—No doubt, but what can they do against a multitude, armed with sophisms, people who are convinced that the only source of heroic actions is in the passions, and that the only legitimate laws are the impulses of nature ? What can be expected form events when advantage is sought to be derived

only from the fountains of corruption, and that safety is only hoped to be found in a labyrinth of evil and in the midst of every danger? This conversation made me rather melancholy, creating uneasiness about my future greatness, to which a political storm, or merely a change of ministry, might prove so ruinous!

I went to dine next day with the Marchioness d'Inglar; and arrived just as Madam de Palmis was leaving her; every one was delighted with the appointment of Eusebius to the Embassy of Russia: Edelie had known it the day before, but with a prohibition to mention the subject; because the diplomas were not then *officially* announced. Having sat down close to Edelie at table, when the conversation became general, she congratulated me on my appointment with an air of sorrow. At this time, said I, my only grief arises from the idea of expatriating myself....although, I said no more than the truth; this regret was merely a momentary impression, and not a real af-

fliction; for love, without hope, can only occupy the second rank in a heart open to ambition.

During the dinner I related to Edelie the history of Matilda's amours with the Prince de S***: she had already heard her spoken of in company; but it was not believed that the Prince would marry her, so that I astonished Edelie greatly by informing her, that he had privately obtained a dispensation for the banns; and that, in order to avoid all opposition, he intended to marry her the next day at seven o'clock in the morning, without bustle or parade; moreover that I was to be one of the witnesses. I am not sorry, said Edelie, that a person, who has borne the name of Delmour, is about to marry a great nobleman. Yes, I replied, laughing, that is what Mademoiselle de Versec would call *an alliance.* Although endeavouring to ridicule Mademoiselle de Versec on this point, I was highly flattered in my own mind, on reflecting that a woman, I had called my aunt, should

make such a match. Mademoiselle de Versec had quarrelled with her niece, before my uncle's death ; however, they had occasionally seen each other from time to time ; but, for the last six months they had no correspondence whatever; the former was therefore totally ignorant of her connexion with the Prince de S***, and consequently of her intended marriage ; while Matilda determined to defer communicating it to her, until the ceremony should be over. I attended at the nuptials, on the following day, and supported the canopy along with the old Commandant de Nelmur, the only person of their acquaintance to whom the secret had been confided. After the ceremony, which took place at Paris, we returned to the Prince's residence, where Matilda was solemnly proclaimed Princess de S***** ; whilst breakfast was preparing for us, I openly announced to Matilda the favor I had so lately received ; she congratulated me cordially, as did the Prince. Matilda added, that I would make great progress

as she had always predicted. Nothing could exceed the delirium of pride and joy into which her new dignity threw the *Princess* ; though she dissembled her real feelings, on the occasion, I confess that, in my eyes, her new rank embellished her considerably, and I thought her still prettier and more witty than before, until then I had looked on Matilda with indifference; but I now examined her with that kind of curiosity which is shewn for celebrated personages, as if I had then seen her for the first time: it appeared to me that to attain this degree of elevation, it was necessary to possess something extraordinary, both as to character and talents ; I mistook servility and artifice for superiority of mind. Thus it is, that the crafty are appreciated when crowned with success.

After breakfast, Matilda retired ; she returned in about a quarter of an hour, and taking me aside, said: My dear Julien, I have a favor to request of you ; I have written to my aunt, to acquaint her of my marriage, and to invite her to dinner today; I request you will take charge of this

note, and tell her that, if I had not been enjoined the strictest secrecy, until this moment, I would have confided all to her. My carriage shall be sent any hour she likes to name ; do all you can, therefore, to make her accept the invitation ; but take care she does not come in a hackney-coach, that would never do on such a solemn occasion as this. I promised to exert myself in executing this commission. Matilda then presented me with a very handsome box of lapis lazuli, which she requested me to accept as a pledge of her friendship ; I kissed the hand that gave it, and hastened to Mademoiselle de Versec, enjoying before-hand the great astonishment my visit would occasion. I reached the Marquis d'Inglar's, and delivered the letter which, while it inspired her with indescribable joy and surprise, also threw her into a paroxism of rage and envy, at the idea of not being let into the secret, and that an affair of this importance should have been concluded without asking her advice. She launched into complaints, uttered a thou-

sand exclamations, and suddenly requesting me to wait a little, she ran to the Marchioness d'Inglar, from whom she returned in about twenty minutes, and appeared quite oppressed with business; she desired me to tell her niece that, to avoid shewing her a slight, which might appear inexcusable to the public, she would go; adding in a cold and haughty manner, that she had no need of the carriage; I wanted to press it on her; but she dismissed me abruptly, saying she had not a moment to lose, and must dress immediately. I now saw the attendants of the Marchioness come in, to assist her own, which proved that nothing would be wanting to heighten the brilliancy of her decorations. I returned to Matilda, who was also occupied with her toilet. Remaining in the drawing-room, I saw successively arrive, all the persons who had been invited; they consisted of those whom I had met at the Prince's country-house, together with three or four more; Florbel was also among the number. At last Matilda appeared, resplendent with

gold, pearls and precious stones. She entered the apartment with a triumphant air, and yet her carriage was somewhat embarrassed; she had been very graceful at the breakfast, because there was no *etiquette* with the Commandant or myself; but being now obliged to make a figure, she thought another style and other manners were a duty imposed by her rank; from the want of being accustomed to high life, she did know that such a change, when suddenly made, is always ridiculous; if manners are what they ought to be, that is simple, modest, polite, and obliging, upstarts should adhere to them, because they are decorous in every rank: if they are bad, time alone can improve them: till then, people should behave with great reserve, and a becoming diffidence.

Matilda, who was persuaded in her own mind, that she was capable of every thing, after having entrapped a great nobleman, exhibited a *fanciful* mode of behaviour, taken from country and city politeness, mixed up with purse-proud

insolence; she treated the ladies coldly; acted a serious and prudish part with the Prince's relations, assuming a high and patronizing tone with the literary men; all around her were displeased, though she thought herself sublime: she was ignorant that the ladies of high rank, whom she wished to imitate, conceived they could only be agreeable at their own houses, in proportion to the equality established amongst those who were received at them; that the shades of politeness shewn to each, should be so delicate, as not to hurt the feelings of any, and that if any particular distinction be shewn, it should only appear as the effect of esteem for talents, or respect for age and honorable actions; in short, that the true dignity of the mistress of a house, is to know how to shew, by her mode of reception, a value for the least important and remarkable persons, whom she permits to visit her.

Passing gently behind Matilda's chair, I whispered to her that Mademoiselle de Versec would come, but had refused the carriage. This highly displeased Matilda,

who could not bear the idea of seeing her aunt come in a hackney-coach, on that memorable day. She replied, in a tone of great insolence, that she supposed I must have executed her commission badly. I said nothing, but looking earnestly at her, smiled, and withdrew to another part of the room. Shortly afterwards, a carriage was heard to drive into the court-yard; when the Prince looked out of a window; Matilda trembled, thinking it was Mademoiselle de Versec, who, in her character of aunt, would audaciously enter the court-yard of the mansion in a hackney-coach, from which, according to custom, they were totally excluded. She drew breath, when the Prince said, aloud, it is a carriage with the Inglar livery; and it is also that of my aunt, boldy cried Matilda; then I shall go and receive her, rejoined the Prince.

The solemn entry of Mademoiselle de Versec, appearing for the first time in the magnificent saloon of her Excellency the Princess de S****, her niece, really furnished something to stare at! she leaned

majestically on the arm of the Prince; I had never seen her so loaded with finery, although her gown was by no means new; but she had borrowed some rich lace and splendid diamonds from the Marchioness d'Inglar, whose large cross of brilliants and earrings I easily recognized...*Matilda* advanced to meet and embrace her aunt; but she considered it derogatory to the dignity of her present situation, to kiss the hand, presented with such dignity by the former. Mademoiselle de Versec, who, on occasions of great ceremony, had naturally a difficulty of respiration could now scarcely breathe; she trembled, stammered and tottered; they hastened to place her in an arm-chair; when, to disguise this violent emotion of vanity, she played off her tears of tender affection. The Prince alone was deceived by her, he ordered a glass of sugar and water to be brought, whilst the rest of the company laughed in their sleeves at a scene, as comic as it was ridiculous. What passed at dinner was not less so: Mademoiselle de Versec, arrogating to herself the *rights* of relation-

ship, on so brilliant an occasion, wished to divide the honours of the table with Matilda, and as according to the habits of citizens, which Matilda had adopted in a great measure, this is a crime against the supreme sovereignty of the mistress, Matilda was highly offended at it; but Mademoiselle de Versec, whose raptures were interminable, paid no attention to her ill-humour: she commanded the butler and servants as if they were her own, unceremoniously seized fowls, turkeys and partridges, which she carved, offered and helped with equal coolness; after dinner, in spite of all Matilda's efforts, she arranged one half of the parties at the card tables. Florbel had composed some hasty verses for the occasion but they remained unsung, for there was two little harmony, and gaiety at this wedding dinner, to admit of their recital. I am convinced, however, that he did not fail to employ them elsewhere, as poetry of this nature answer equally well at all nuptial feasts; for it is perfectly understood, that in the various kinds of epithalamiums, all the

brides are lovely, while the bridegrooms are the happiest of mortals!

We had dined at half past two; Mademoiselle de Versec retired at six, and took me with her to the Marchioness d'Inglar's. On our way, I learned that she was by no means satisfied with her reception at the Prince's, adding that Matilda would now have great need of her advice, to enable her to fill her new station with becoming dignity, and that it was a most fortunate event she happened to be present that day, to assist her in doing the honors of her house. She added, with some bitterness, that, on entering, Matilda should have named and presented *the most distinguished* personages of the company to her. As for the Prince, since he had come down to receive her, she thought him very amiable, and highly praised *his truly noble manners.*

I remained the whole evening at the Marchioness d'Inglar's with Edelie; it was sad and sorrowful; as I was to depart the next morning at six o'clock, Casilda was there, although she did not usually appear

at supper; but, on this occasion, she wished to bid me farewell! I could not say a word to Edelie, without being overheard, because there was no one present but the Marquis and Marchioness: the only ray of sprightliness was elicited on my arrival. Whilst Mademoiselle de Versec was throwing off her finery, I took the liberty of making some droll observations on the wedding, which made Edelie smile, while the Marquis laughed heartily; to his great regret, the return of Mademoiselle de Versec imposed silence on me. At eleven o'clock, I rose to take leave; the Marquis and Marchioness embraced me, my tears flowed abundantly, and they were so much affected, that Edelie was also desired to embrace me, for she ought to consider me as a second brother: her face was covered with blushes, as she advanced I pressed my lips to her cheek, which was bathed in tears. This moment, Casilda, sobbing, came to throw herself in my arms, I took her, and turning round so as to be seen only by her benefactress

I looked tenderly at Edelie, saying, Ah! forget me not!...... After having pronounced these words, in broken acccents, I retired, hastily, and with inexpressible agony, from the drawing-room. The night was passed in tears; I had the heart-rending image of Edelie, pale and trembling constantly before my eyes: in vain I called ambition, hope and expectation to my relief, they give but feeble consolation in those moments when the soul is really afflicted; and when, in spite of long experience our impressions are still believed to be indelible. Thus it was that I entered my post-chaise, at day-light, next morning with all that melancholy which may be supposed to oppress one who departs for a long exile.

END OF VOL. II.

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